VISIONARIES

GURU NANAK

Given a choice, Guru Nanak would rather have been a guest at a poor hard working man's hut than at a rich but idle landlord's mansion. His vision and intellect helped change an entire community. Combining wisdom with mercy, his teachings impressed Hindus and Muslims alike, while his songs of devotion gained favour with even the most oppressive of masters.

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GURU NANAK

THE FOUNDING GURU OF SIKHISM

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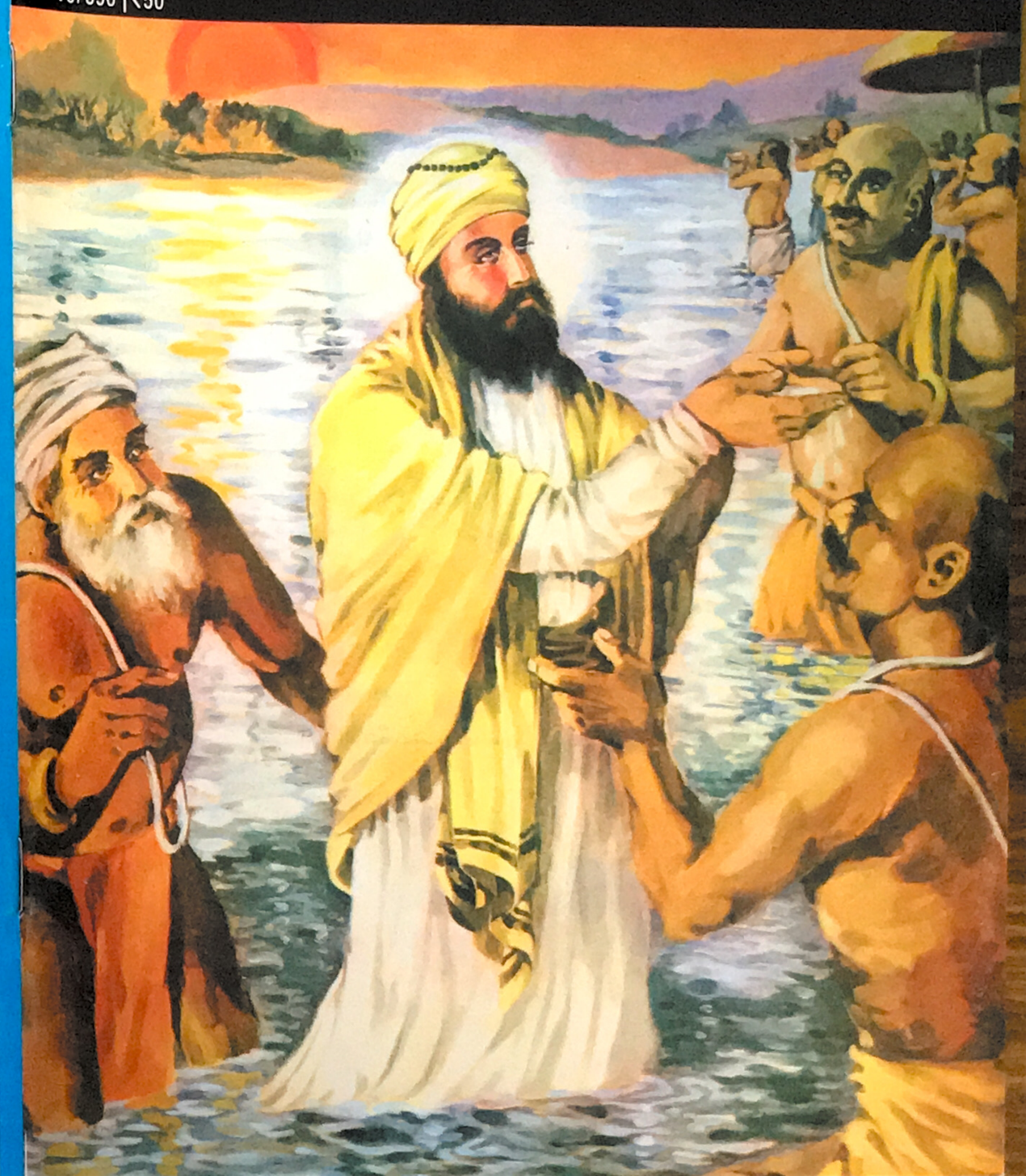


GURU NANAK
GURU NANAK WAS BORN IN 1469, AT TALWANDI, NOW IN WEST PAKISTAN. HIS MOTHER WAS TRIPTA AND HIS FATHER MEHTA KALU.

WHEN HE WAS BORN, PEOPLE FLOCKED TO SHOWER THEIR GOOD WISHES.
WHAT A CHARMING BABY!
SEE, HOW HE SMILES.
THE FAMILY PRIEST, HARDAYAL WAS IMPRESSED BY THE BABY'S HOROSCOPE.
WHAT WILL YOU CALL HIM?
THE CHILD WILL BE A GREAT SEER AND PROPHET. HIS FAME WILL SPREAD FAR AND WIDE.
NANAK AFTER HIS SISTER NANKI.
NANKI LOVED HER BABY-BROTHER, WHO SOON GREW UP INTO A CHEERFUL, HEALTHY, BOY.
HERE NANAK, TAKE THESE SWEETS.
CAN I SHARE THEM WITH MY FRIENDS?
HOW GENEROUS! HOW LIKE A SAINT HE LOOKS!

TRIPTA TOO WAS HAPPY TO SEE HOW GENEROUS NANAK WAS.
WHY NOT! THERE IS ENOUGH FOR ALL OF YOU.
THANK YOU, MOTHER.
NANAK TOOK THE SWEETS AND RAN TO HIS FRIENDS.
SEE WHAT I HAVE! SEE WHAT I HAVE!
AND HE BEGAN DISTRIBUTING THE SWEETS.
MOTHER GAVE ME ENOUGH FOR ALL OF US.
MMM!
DELICIOUS.
AS SOON AS THEY HAD EATEN THE SWEETS...
COME LET'S RUN RACES!
I'M IN NANAK'S TEAM.
ME TOO!

THEY PLAYED FOR A WHILE. THEN—
I'VE HAD ENOUGH! LET'S REST.
LET'S GO TO THE POND.

AT THE POND—
COME, LET'S SING THE NAME OF GOD. YOU LEAD.
ALL OF THEM SANG BUT NANAK'S VOICE CARRIED THE MOST FERVOUR.

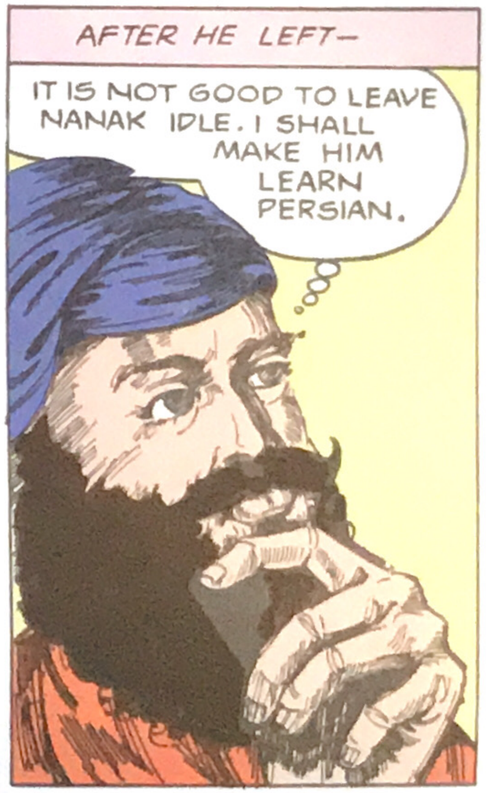
AT THAT MOMENT RAI BULAR, THE MUSLIM LANDLORD FOR WHOM NANAK'S FATHER WORKED, WAS PASSING THAT WAY.
WHAT A MELODIOUS VOICE! HOW SOOTHING THE WORDS. NANAK IS NO ORDINARY CHILD.

RAI BULAR, UNOBSERVED, SAT ON THE GRASS, FORGETTING THE MATERIAL WORLD AS HE LOST HIMSELF IN THE DIVINE SONG.

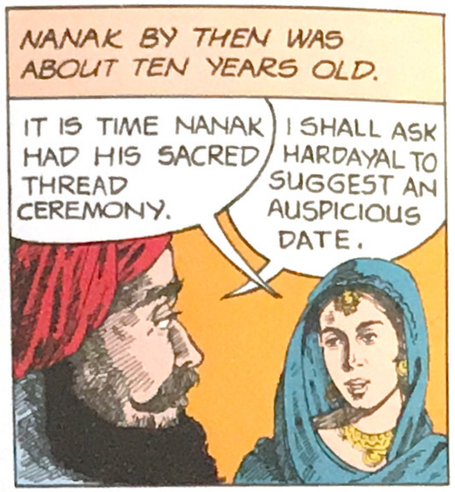
WHEN NANAK WAS SIX YEARS OLD
SON, IT IS TIME YOU STARTED SCHOOL.
YES, FATHER.

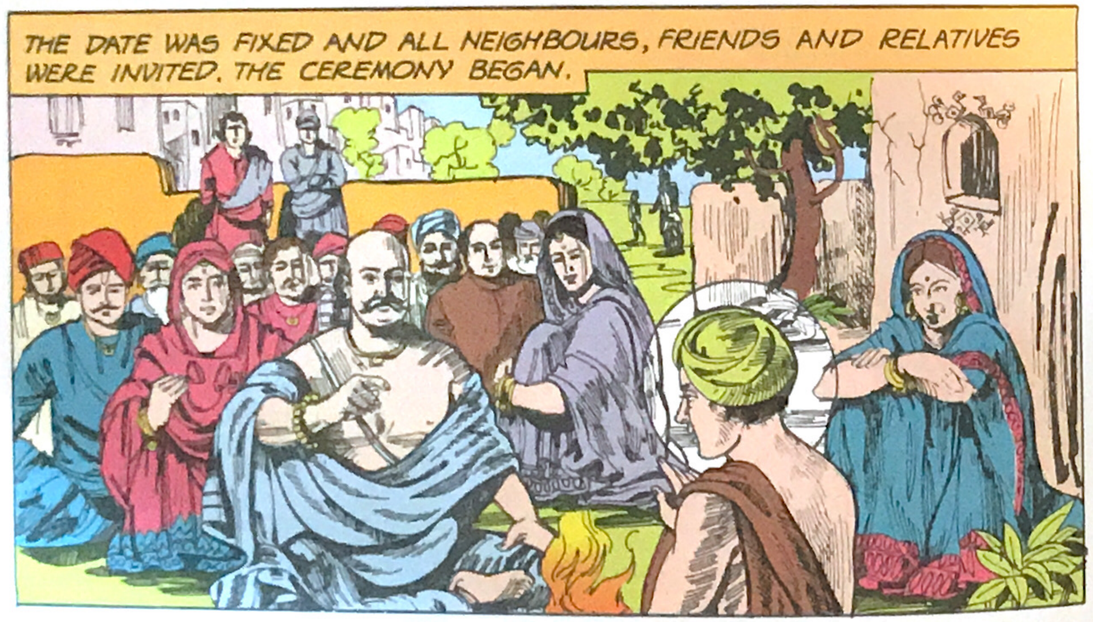
HE WAS AN EXCELLENT PUPIL AND SOON MASTERED ALL THERE WAS TO LEARN.
NANAK DOES NOT NEED ME ANYMORE.
I MUST SPEAK TO HIS FATHER.

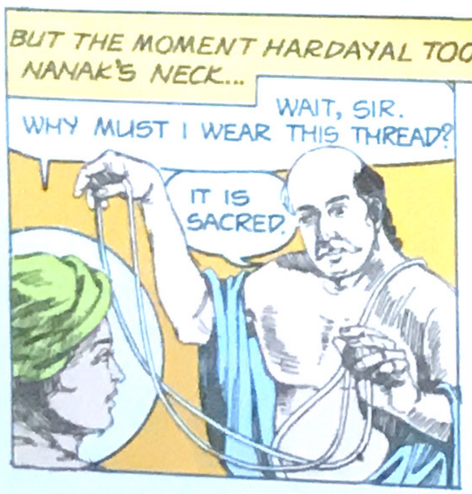
SO HE WENT TO MEHTA KALU.
YOUR SON IS AN EXCEPTIONAL CHILD. HE HAS MASTERED ALL THAT I CAN TEACH HIM.


AFTER HE LEFT—
IT IS NOT GOOD TO LEAVE NANAK IDLE. I SHALL MAKE HIM LEARN PERSIAN.

BUT THE SAME THING HAPPENED WITH THE PERSIAN TEACHER. NANAK MASTERED ALL WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD AND HIS TEACHER BROUGHT HIM BACK TO MEHTA KALU.

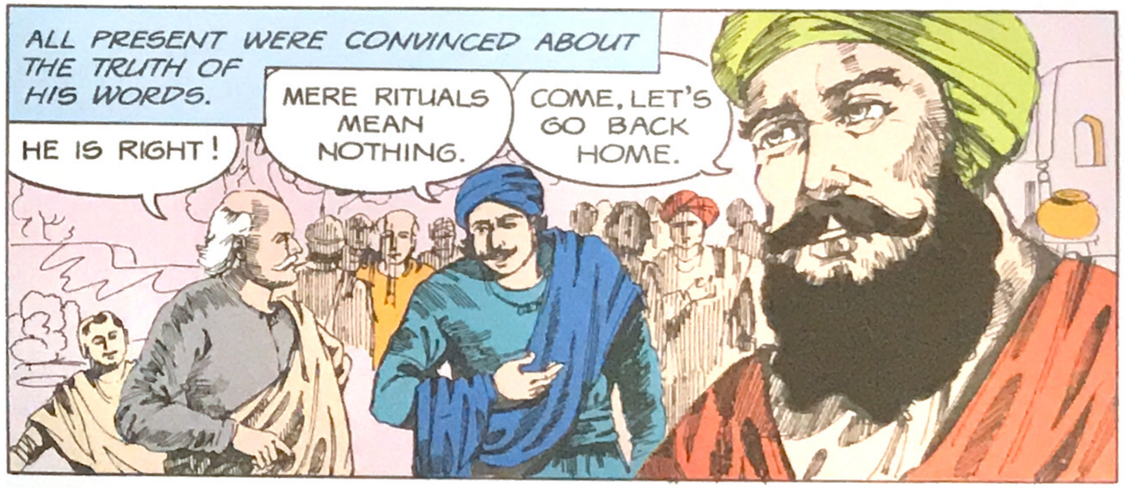

NANAK BY THEN WAS ABOUT TEN YEARS OLD.
IT IS TIME NANAK HAD HIS SACRED THREAD CEREMONY.
I SHALL ASK HARDAYAL TO SUGGEST AN AUSPICIOUS DATE.

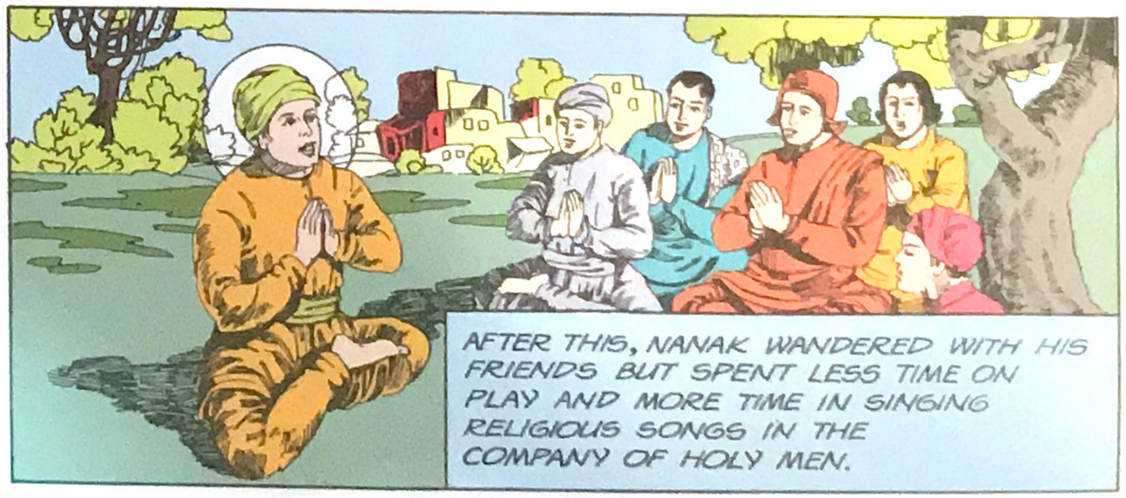

THE DATE WAS FIXED AND ALL NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS AND RELATIVES WERE INVITED. THE CEREMONY BEGAN.


BUT THE MOMENT HARDAYAL TOOK THE SACRED THREAD TO PUT IT OVER NANAK'S NECK...
WAIT, SIR. WHY MUST I WEAR THIS THREAD?
IT IS SACRED.

WILL IT MAKE ME GOOD AND KIND?
I...I'M NOT SURE.

THEN IT IS OF NO USE TO ME. GIVE ME INSTEAD THE SACRED THREAD OF MERCY AND CONTENT-MENT!

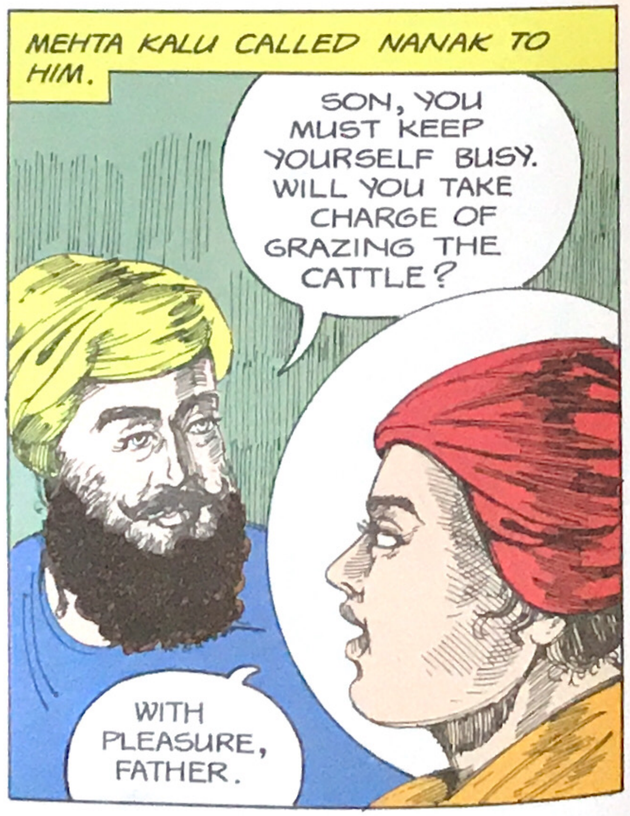

ALL PRESENT WERE CONVINCED ABOUT THE TRUTH OF HIS WORDS.
HE IS RIGHT!
MERE RITUALS MEAN NOTHING.
COME, LET'S GO BACK HOME.

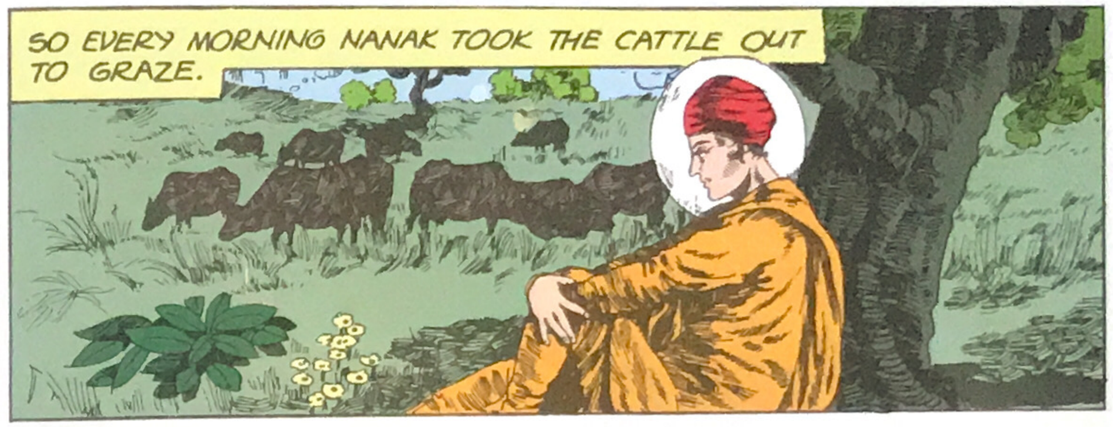

AFTER THIS, NANAK WANDERED WITH HIS FRIENDS BUT SPENT LESS TIME ON PLAY AND MORE TIME IN SINGING RELIGIOUS SONGS IN THE COMPANY OF HOLY MEN.

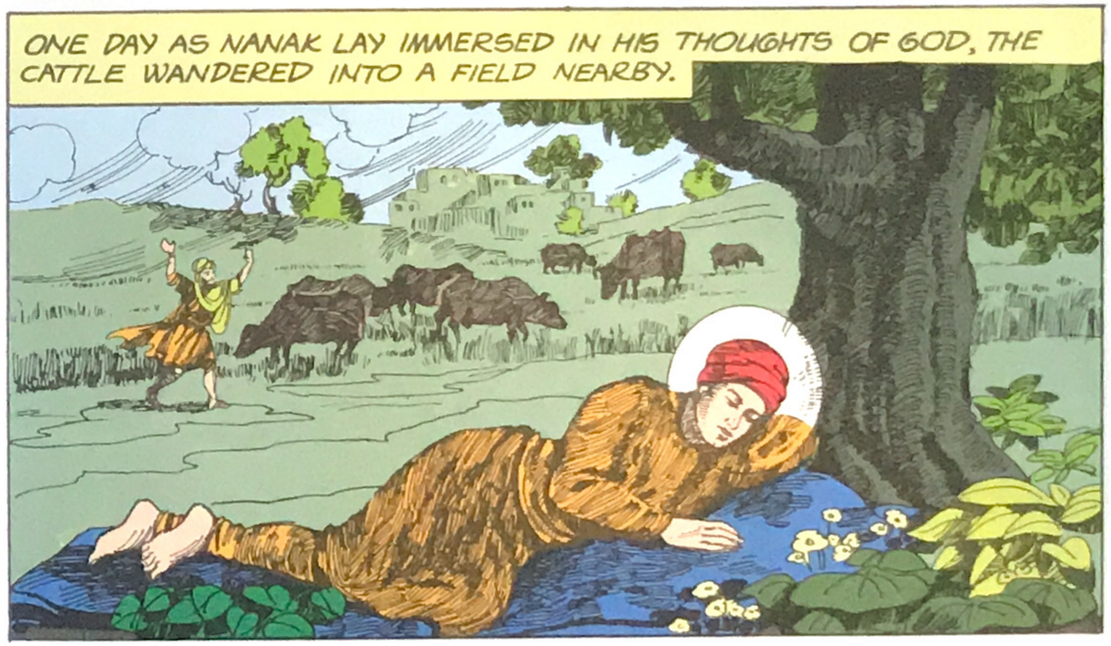
MEHTA KALU WAS WORRIED.
HE HAS NOTHING LEFT TO LEARN. HE HAS DEFIED TRADITION AND YET CONVINCED THE ELDERS.

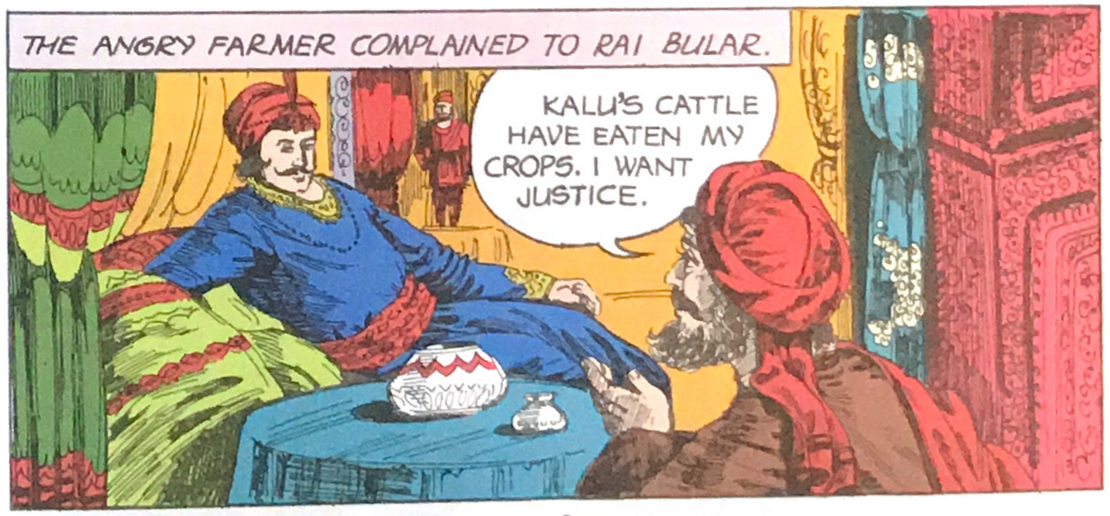
IF HE CONTINUES THIS WAY, I'M AFRAID HE'LL BECOME AN IDLER.

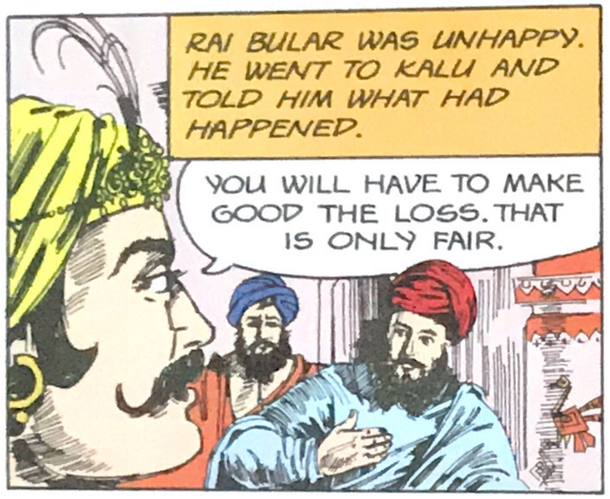
I KNOW WHAT. I'LL MAKE HIM TEND CATTLE.
THAT'S IT. HE WILL BE DOING SOME USEFUL WORK. AT THE SAME TIME HE CAN BE IN THE FOREST WHICH HE LOVES SO DEARLY.


MEHTA KALU CALLED NANAK TO HIM.
SON, YOU MUST KEEP YOURSELF BUSY. WILL YOU TAKE CHARGE OF GRAZING THE CATTLE?
WITH PLEASURE, FATHER.


SO EVERY MORNING NANAK TOOK THE CATTLE OUT TO GRAZE.


ONE DAY AS NANAK LAY IMMERSED IN HIS THOUGHTS OF GOD, THE CATTLE WANDERED INTO A FIELD NEARBY.

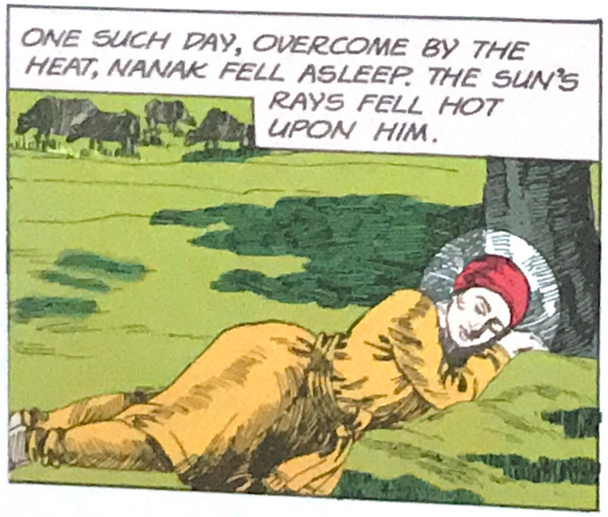

THE ANGRY FARMER COMPLAINED TO RAI BULAR.
KALU'S CATTLE HAVE EATEN MY CROPS. I WANT JUSTICE.

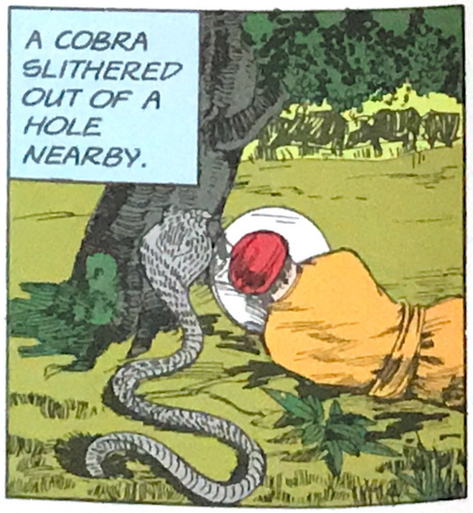

RAI BULAR WAS UNHAPPY. HE WENT TO KALU AND TOLD HIM WHAT HAD HAPPENED.
YOU WILL HAVE TO MAKE GOOD THE LOSS. THAT IS ONLY FAIR.

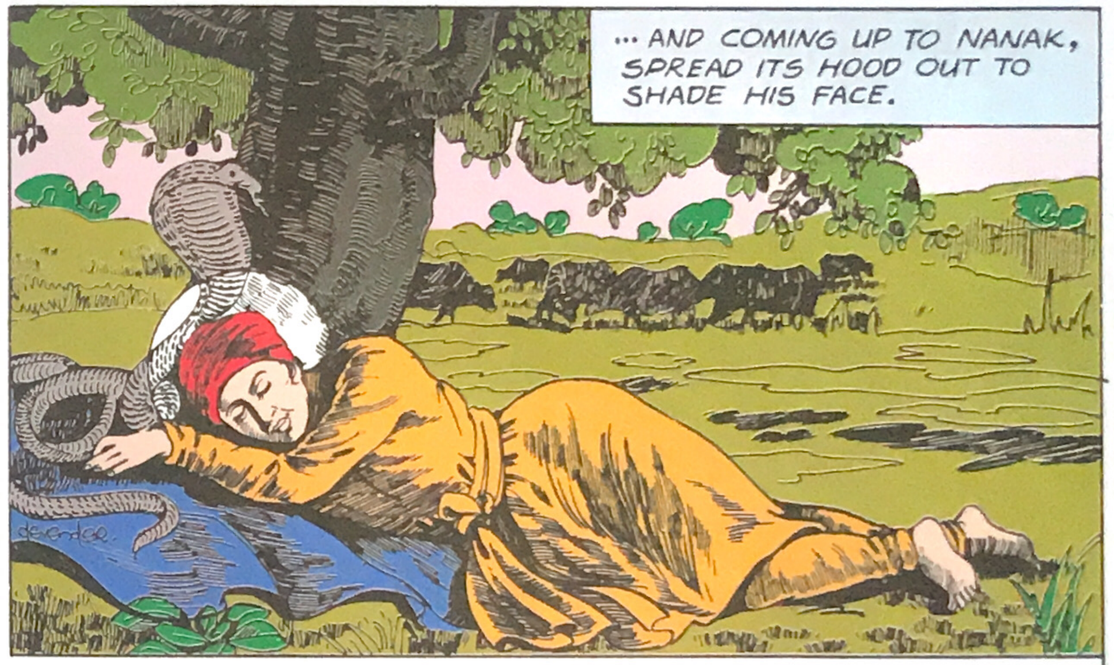
EXCUSE ME, SIR. WOULDN'T IT BE PROPER FIRST TO SEE THE FIELD.

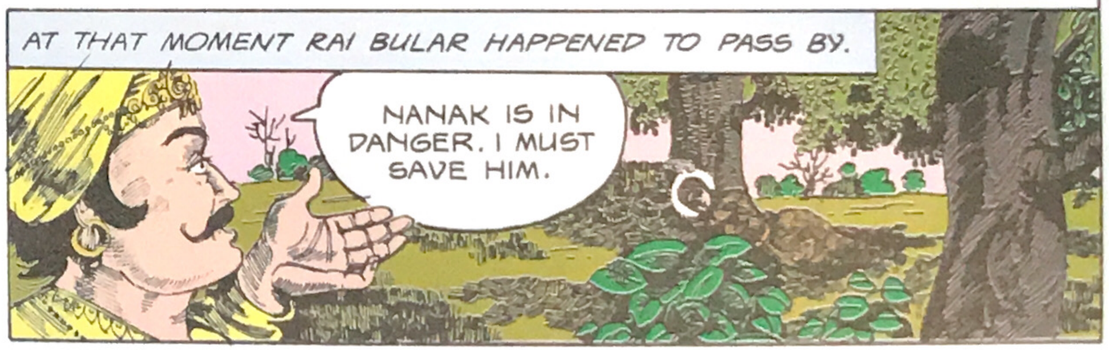
THEY WENT TO THE FIELD AND LO!
THE CORN IS UNTOUCHED. YOU HAVE WASTED OUR TIME FOR NOTHING.
B...BUT I...I...I... I'M SORRY.

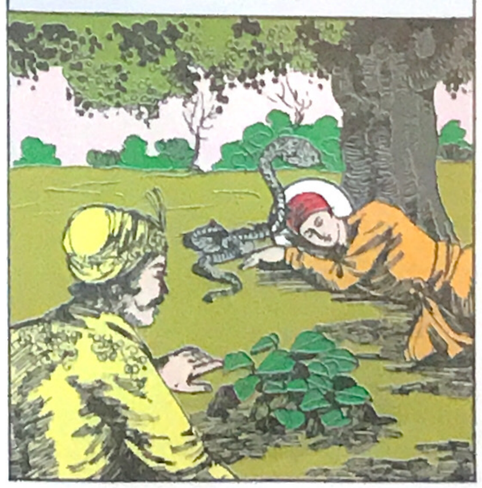
AND NANAK CONTINUED TAKING THE CATTLE OUT AS USUAL.


ONE SUCH DAY, OVERCOME BY THE HEAT, NANAK FELL ASLEEP. THE SUN'S RAYS FELL HOT UPON HIM.


A COBRA SLITHERED OUT OF A HOLE NEARBY.

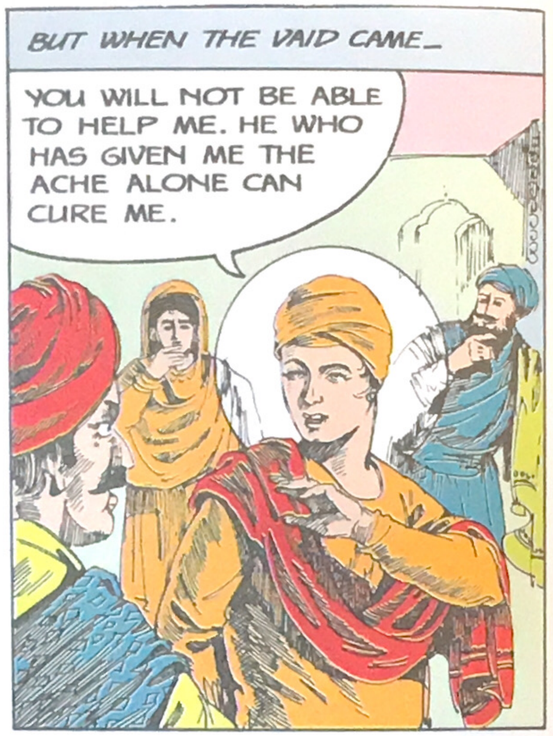

... AND COMING UP TO NANAK, SPREAD ITS HOOD OUT TO SHADE HIS FACE.


AT THAT MOMENT RAI BULAR HAPPENED TO PASS BY.
NANAK IS IN DANGER. I MUST SAVE HIM.

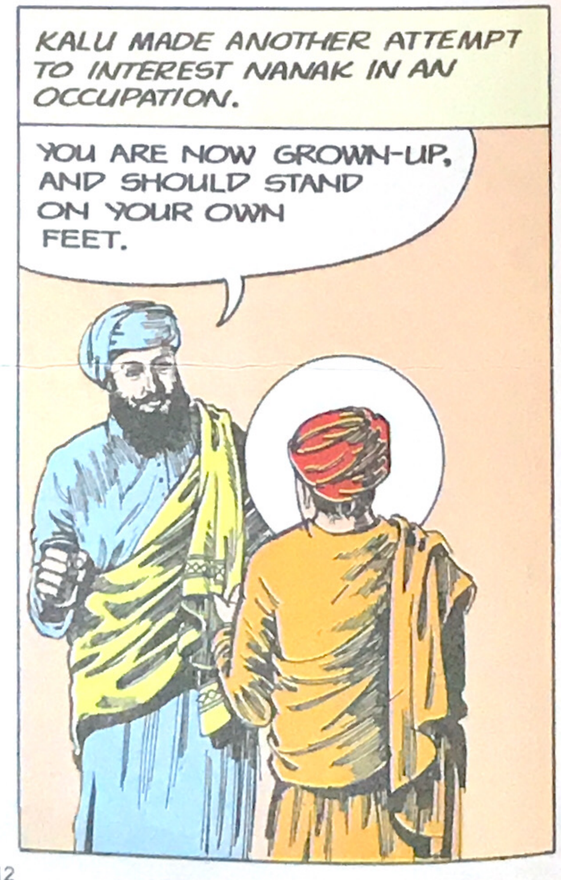

HE WALKED CAUTIOUSLY TOWARDS NANAK.

BUT AS SOON AS THE COBRA SAW HIM IT SLID BACK INTO ITS HOLE.
NANAK SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS AN ORDINARY CHILD. HE IS A SAINT.

AFTER THIS FOR A SPELL NANAK BECAME MOROSE AND MOODY AND WOULD NOT EVEN GO OUT TO TEND THE CATTLE.
I WONDER WHAT'S COME OVER HIM. I CAN NO LONGER BEAR HIS MOODINESS.
LET'S CALL IN THE VAID.*

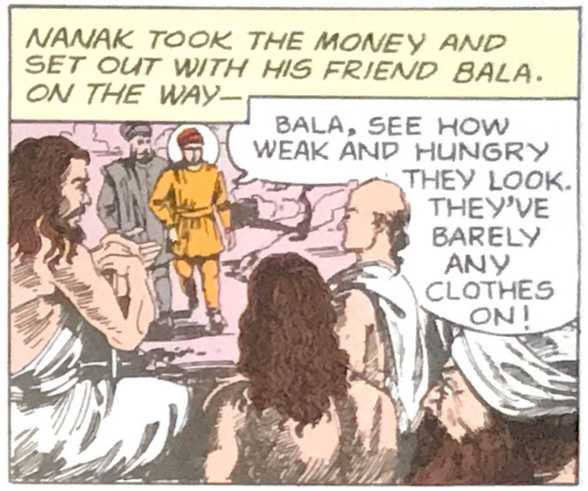

BUT WHEN THE VAID CAME...
YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO HELP ME. HE WHO HAS GIVEN ME THE ACHE ALONE CAN CURE ME.

WITH THIS REALISATION NANAK BECAME HIS OLD SELF.
WHAT A RELIEF TO SEE HIM OUT OF IT.
YES IT IS GOOD TO SEE HIM CHEERFUL AGAIN.


KALU MADE ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO INTEREST NANAK IN AN OCCUPATION.
YOU ARE NOW GROWN-UP, AND SHOULD STAND ON YOUR OWN FEET.

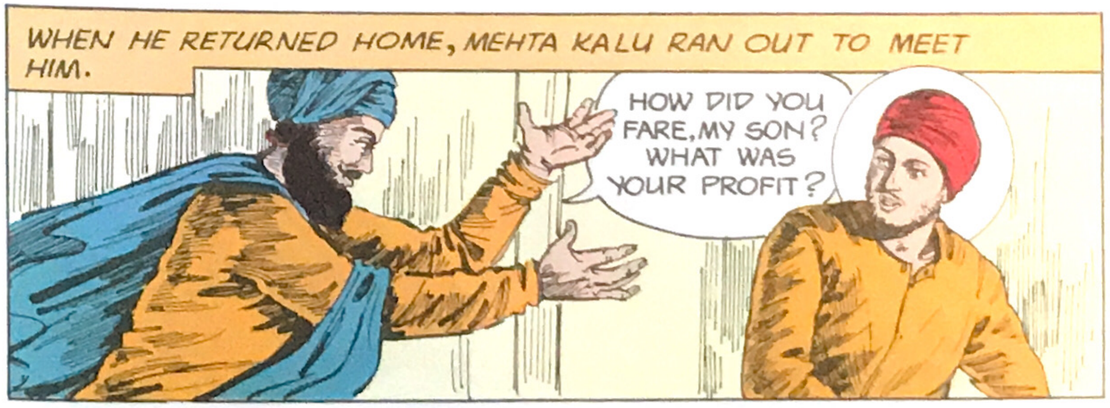
*DOCTOR

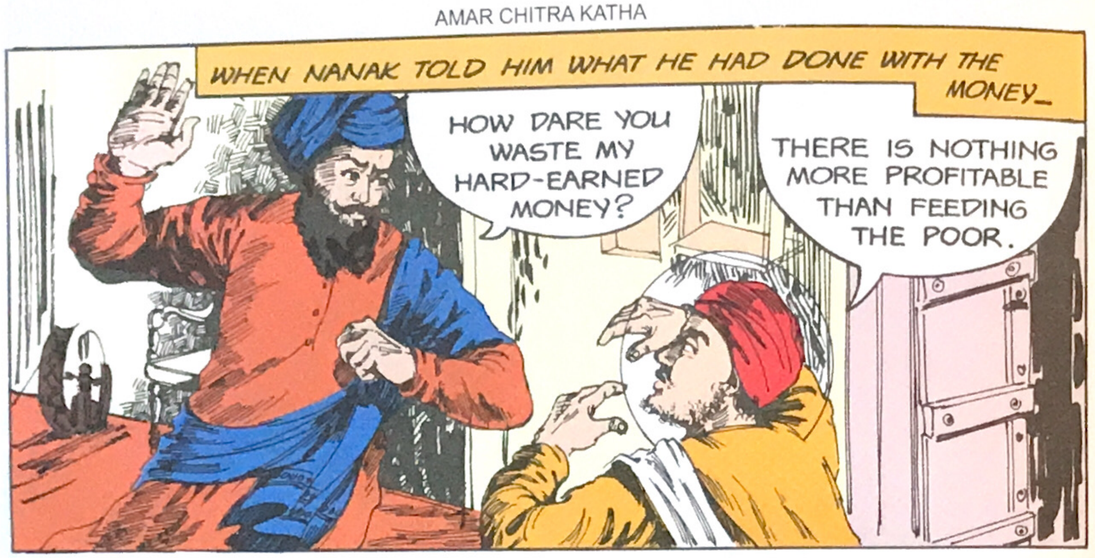
TAKE THIS MONEY. GO TO THE MARKET AND STRIKE A GOOD BARGAIN.
I WILL TRY, FATHER.

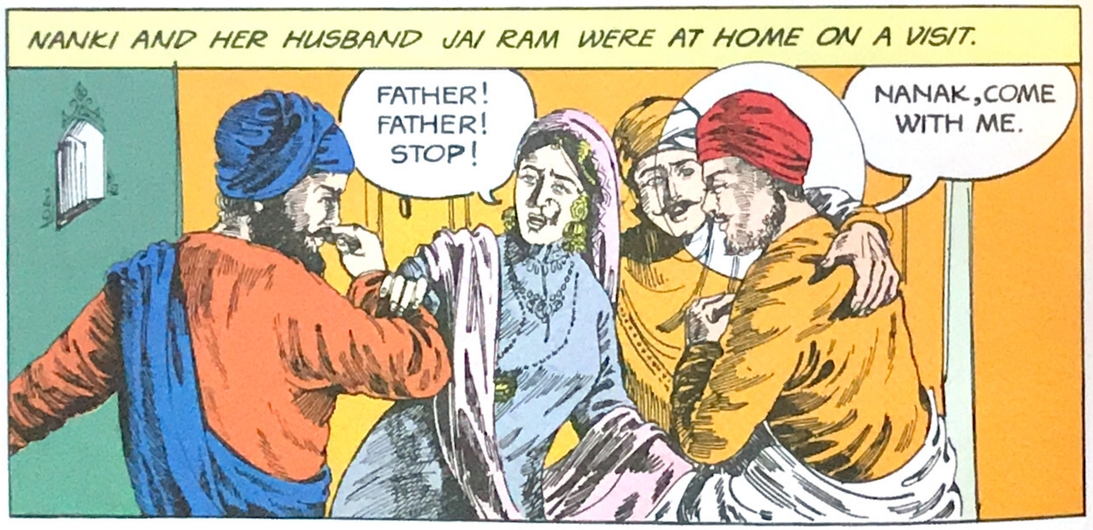

NANAK TOOK THE MONEY AND SET OUT WITH HIS FRIEND BALA. ON THE WAY—
BALA, SEE HOW WEAK AND HUNGRY THEY LOOK. THEY'VE BARELY ANY CLOTHES ON!

SO HE WENT TO THE MARKET AND BOUGHT SOME FOOD AND CLOTHES...

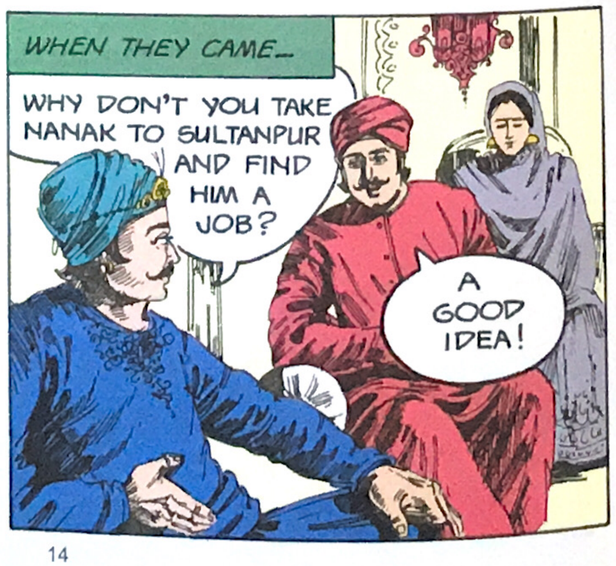
...WHICH HE GAVE TO THEM.
WHAT BETTER BARGAIN COULD I STRIKE?

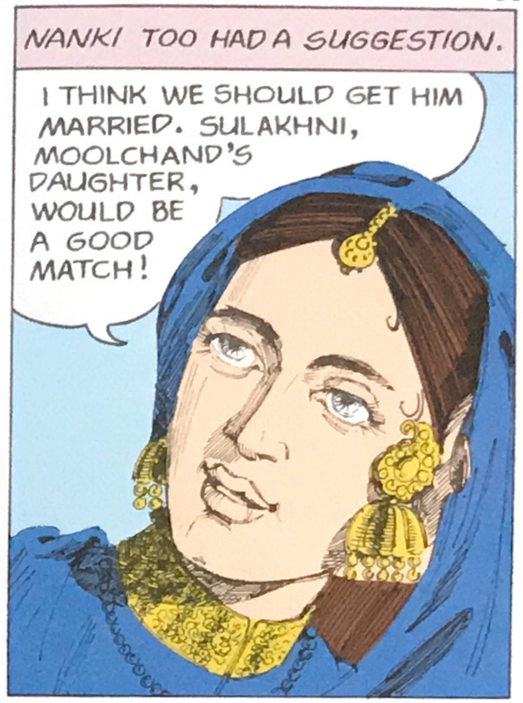

WHEN HE RETURNED HOME, MEHTA KALU RAN OUT TO MEET HIM.
HOW DID YOU FARE, MY SON? WHAT WAS YOUR PROFIT?


WHEN NANAK TOLD HIM WHAT HE HAD DONE WITH THE MONEY_
HOW DARE YOU WASTE MY HARD-EARNED MONEY?
THERE IS NOTHING MORE PROFITABLE THAN FEEDING THE POOR.


NANKI AND HER HUSBAND JAI RAM WERE AT HOME ON A VISIT.
FATHER! FATHER! STOP!
NANAK, COME WITH ME.

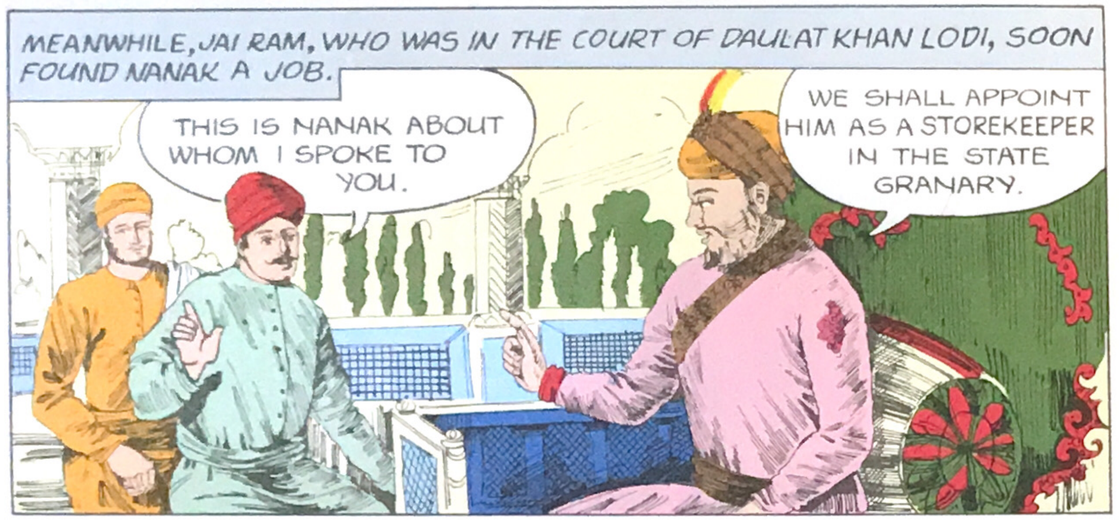
WHEN RAI BULAR HEARD OF THE INCIDENT_
TELL NANKI AND JAI RAM THAT I'D LIKE TO SEE THEM.
YES, SIR.

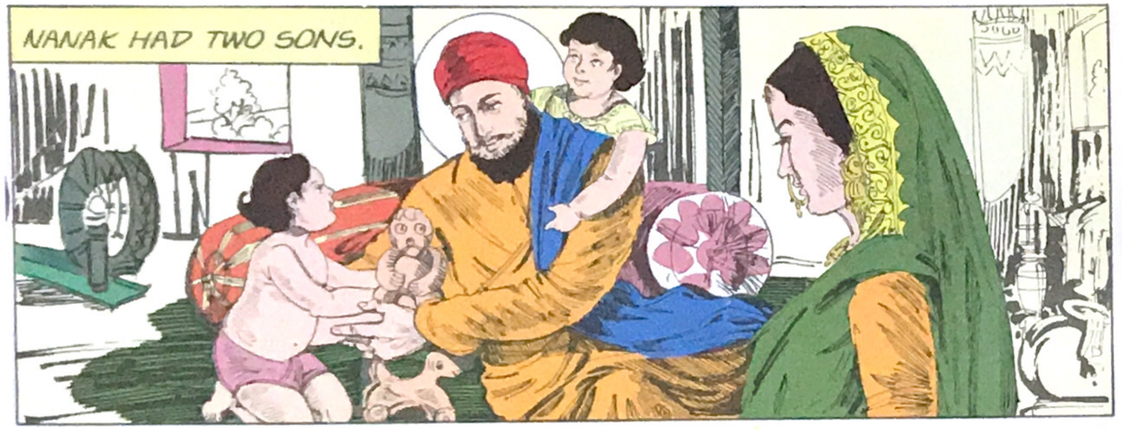

WHEN THEY CAME_
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE NANAK TO SULTANPUR AND FIND HIM A JOB?
A GOOD IDEA!

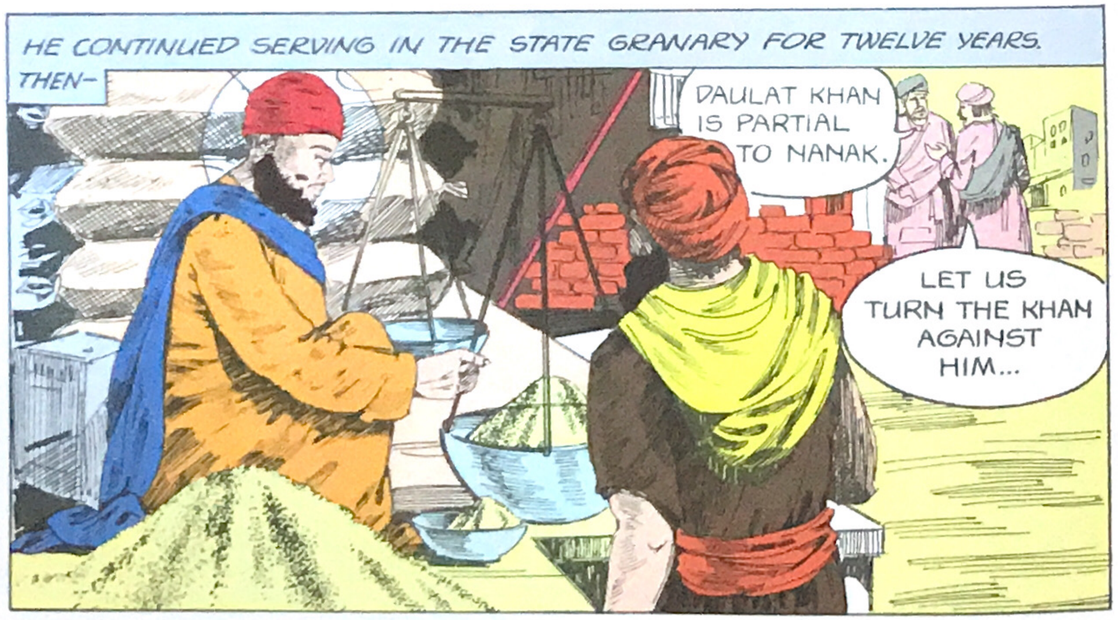

NANKI TOO HAD A SUGGESTION.
I THINK WE SHOULD GET HIM MARRIED. SULAKHNI, MOOLCHAND'S DAUGHTER, WOULD BE A GOOD MATCH!

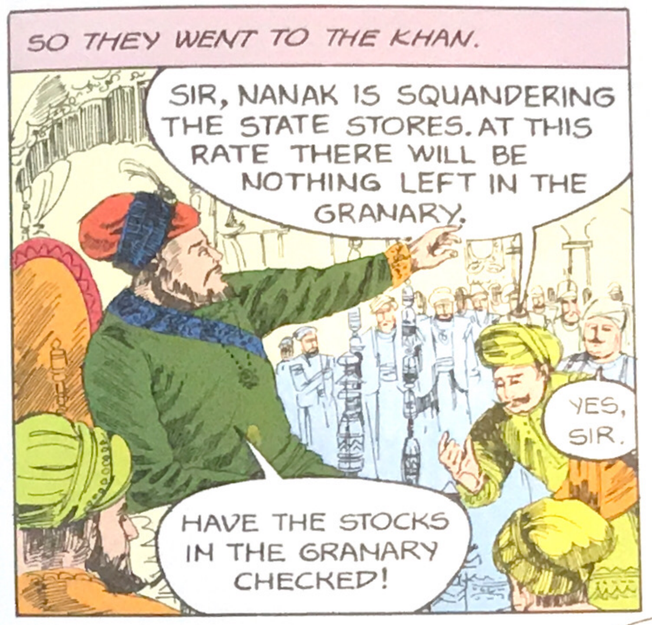
THE PROPOSAL WAS ACCEPTED AND NANAK WAS MARRIED TO SULAKHNI IN 1485. THERE WAS GREAT REJOICING IN THE FAMILY.
A SWEET GIRL. LET'S HOPE SHE SUCCEEDS IN MAKING NANAK A PRACTICAL AND WORLDLY MAN.

MARDANA, NANAK'S FRIEND, CAME TO THE WEDDING.
WHAT GIFT WILL YOU GIVE ME TO REMEMBER THIS OCCASION?
WHAT GIFT CAN BE MORE APT FOR YOU THAN AN INSTRUMENT TO MAKE MUSIC WITH? YOU CAN HAVE THIS REBECK.
THE GIFT WAS NOT FOR MARDANA ALONE. FOR IN THE EVENINGS, AFTER THE DAY'S WORK, NANAK WOULD HURRY TO JOIN MARDANA AND TOGETHER THEY WOULD SING THE PRAISES OF GOD MANY LOVERS OF GOD AND MUSIC JOINED THEM AND NANAK'S FAME SPREAD.


MEANWHILE, JAI RAM, WHO WAS IN THE COURT OF DAULAT KHAN LODI, SOON FOUND NANAK A JOB.
THIS IS NANAK ABOUT WHOM I SPOKE TO YOU.
WE SHALL APPOINT HIM AS A STOREKEEPER IN THE STATE GRANARY.


NANAK HAD TWO SONS.

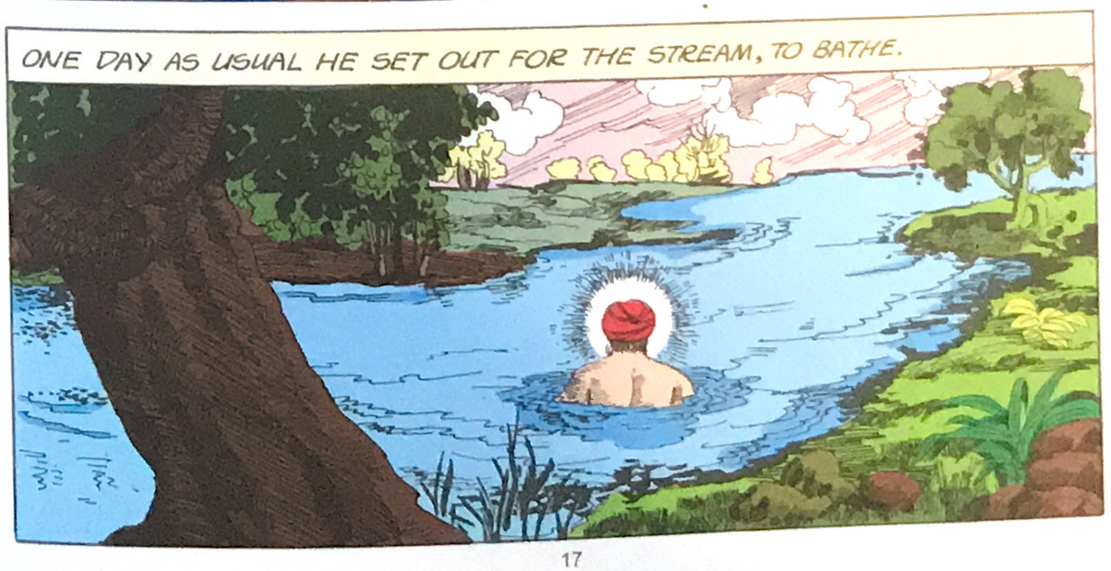

HE CONTINUED SERVING IN THE STATE GRANARY FOR TWELVE YEARS.
THEN-
DAULAT KHAN IS PARTIAL TO NANAK.
LET US TURN THE KHAN AGAINST HIM...


SO THEY WENT TO THE KHAN.
SIR, NANAK IS SQUANDERING THE STATE STORES. AT THIS RATE THERE WILL BE NOTHING LEFT IN THE GRANARY.
YES, SIR.
HAVE THE STOCKS IN THE GRANARY CHECKED!

THE ACCOUNTANT SOON RETURNED.
EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER, SIR.

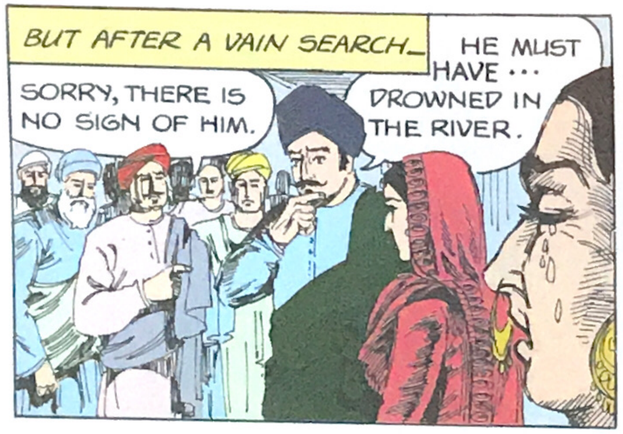
THE KHAN WAS FURIOUS WITH THE CONSPIRATORS.
YOU'VE MADE A BASELESS COMPLAINT. BUT I'LL SPARE YOU THIS TIME. GO AWAY, YOU EVIL MEN!

BUT, FOR NANAK THIS WAS THE LIMIT.
I HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF WORLDLY JOBS.

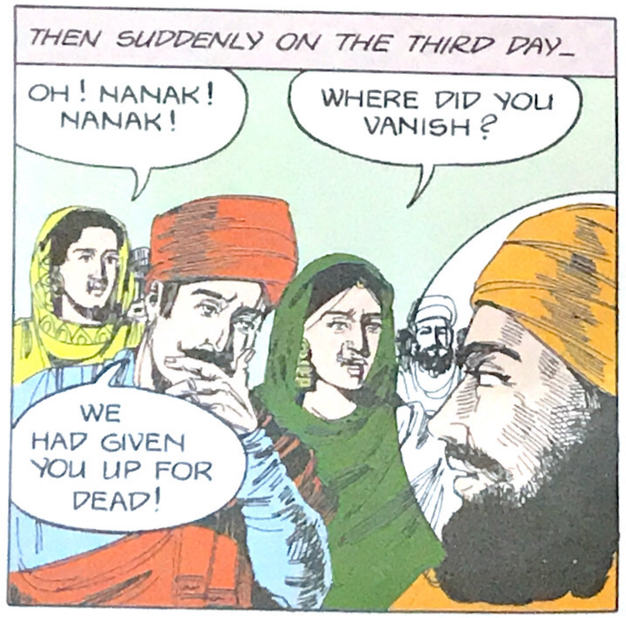

ONE DAY AS USUAL HE SET OUT FOR THE STREAM, TO BATHE.

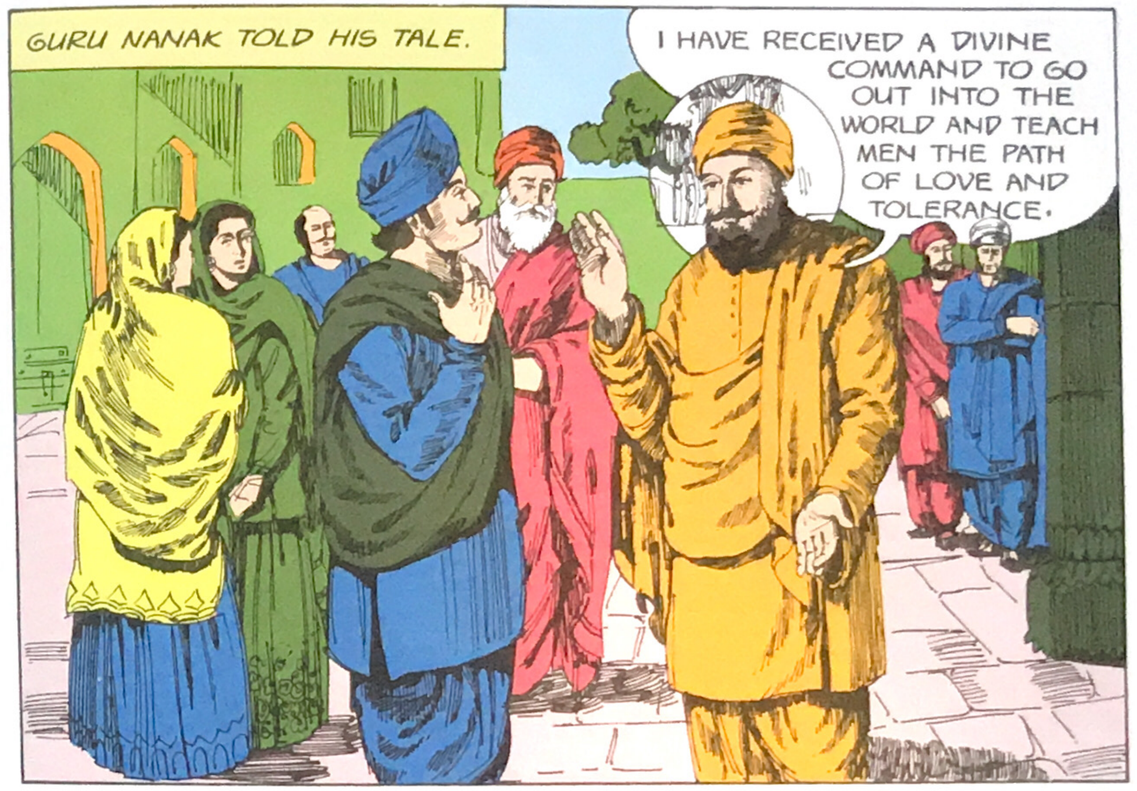
NANKI CAME TO HIS HOME IN THE EVENING.
HERE ARE SOME SWEETS FOR... WHY? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HE...HE...HAS NOT COME HOME YET.

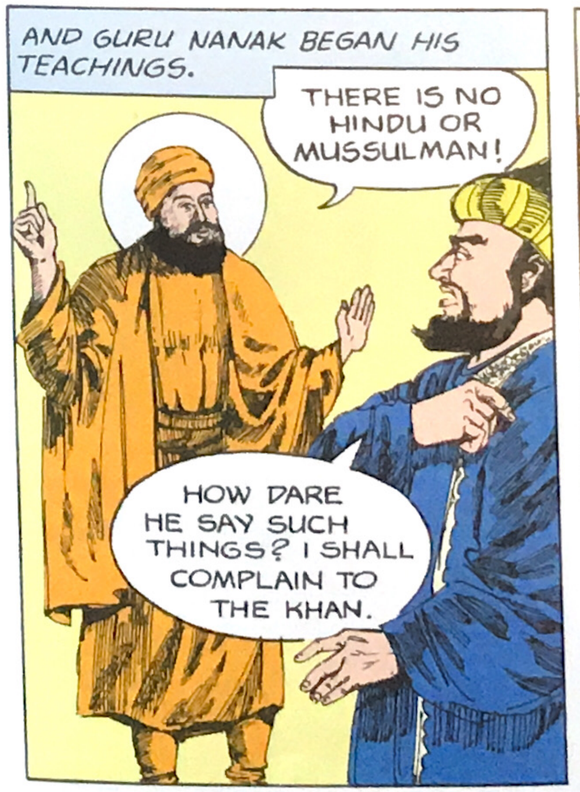
DON'T CRY. WE WILL SEND OUT A SEARCH PARTY.


BUT AFTER A VAIN SEARCH_
SORRY, THERE IS NO SIGN OF HIM.
HE MUST HAVE ... DROWNED IN THE RIVER.

THE WHOLE FAMILY WAS STEEPED IN GLOOM.


THEN SUDDENLY ON THE THIRD DAY_
OH! NANAK! NANAK!
WHERE DID YOU VANISH?
WE HAD GIVEN YOU UP FOR DEAD!

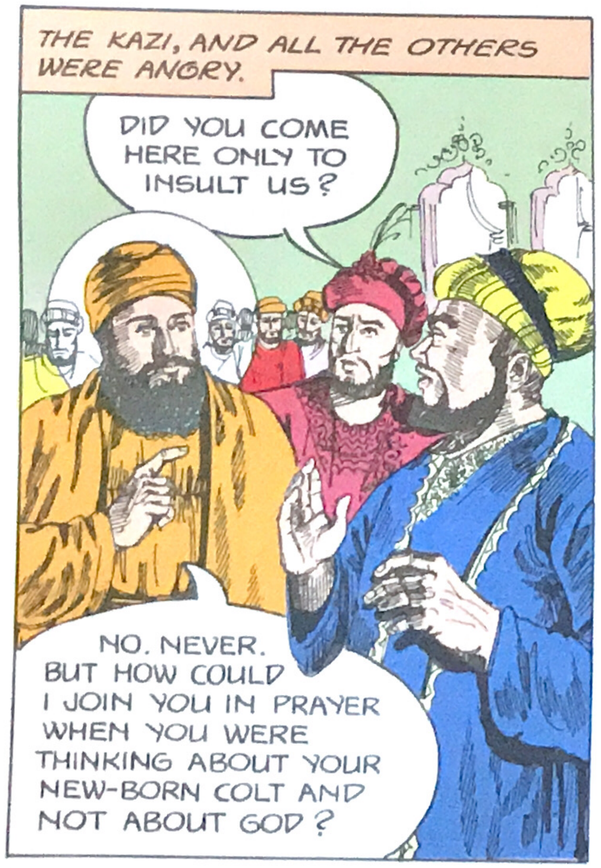

GURU NANAK TOLD HIS TALE.
I HAVE RECEIVED A DIVINE COMMAND TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND TEACH MEN THE PATH OF LOVE AND TOLERANCE.

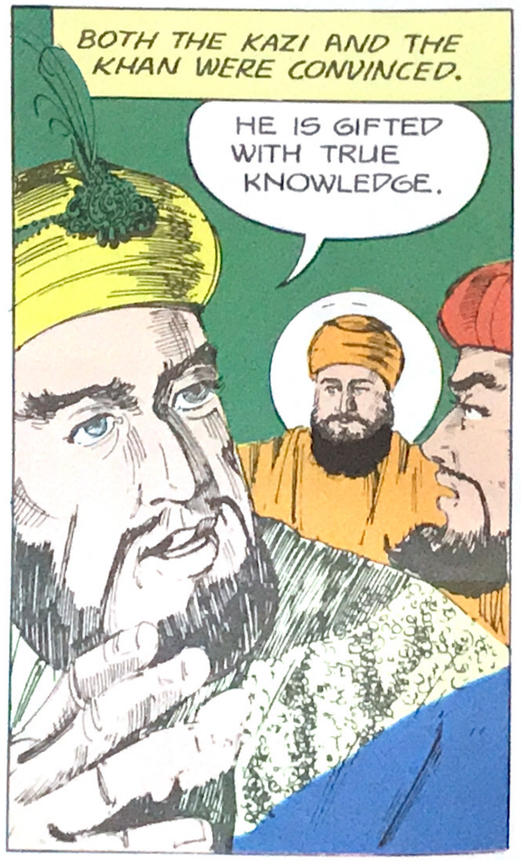

AND GURU NANAK BEGAN HIS TEACHINGS.
THERE IS NO HINDU OR MUSSULMAN!
HOW DARE HE SAY SUCH THINGS? I SHALL COMPLAIN TO THE KHAN.

WHEN THE KHAN HEARD THE COMPLAINT HE SENT FOR GURU NANAK.
ARE YOU A MUSSULMAN OR A HINDU?
NEITHER! I AM A MAN OF GOD.

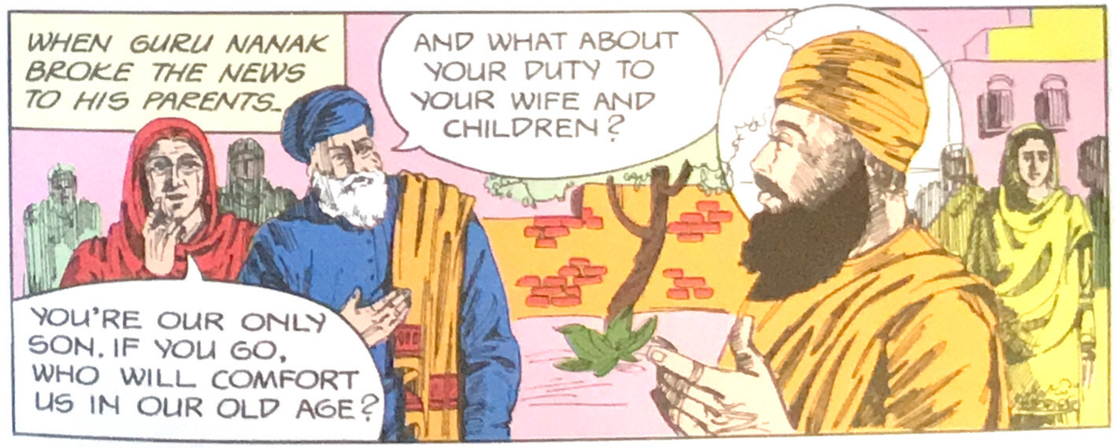
THEN COME AND PRAY WITH US AT THE MOSQUE.
GLADLY!

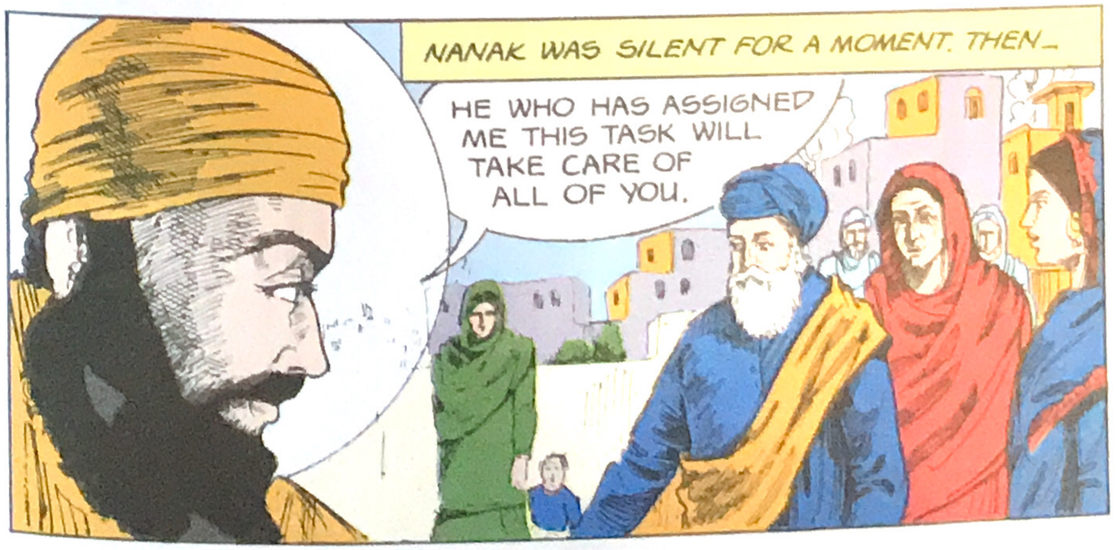
AT THE MOSQUE THE KAZI LED THE PRAYER...
HA! HA! HA!

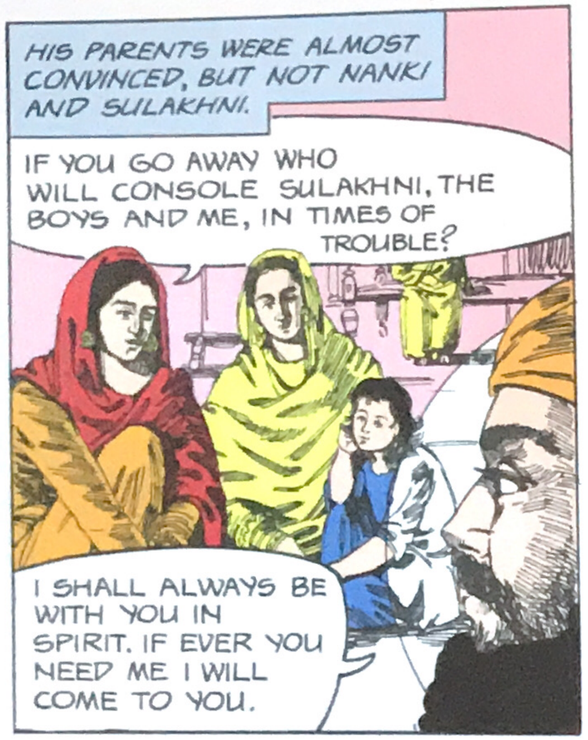

THE KAZI, AND ALL THE OTHERS WERE ANGRY.
DID YOU COME HERE ONLY TO INSULT US?
NO. NEVER. BUT HOW COULD I JOIN YOU IN PRAYER WHEN YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT YOUR NEW-BORN COLT AND NOT ABOUT GOD?


BOTH THE KAZI AND THE KHAN WERE CONVINCED.
HE IS GIFTED WITH TRUE KNOWLEDGE.

SOON AFTER THIS...
MARDANA, I CAN NO LONGER DELAY MY WORK. I MUST LEAVE HOME TO SHOW MEN THE PATH OF LOVE AND SERVICE.
MASTER, I WILL ACCOMPANY YOU.


WHEN GURU NANAK BROKE THE NEWS TO HIS PARENTS...
YOU'RE OUR ONLY SON. IF YOU GO, WHO WILL COMFORT US IN OUR OLD AGE?
AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR DUTY TO YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN?

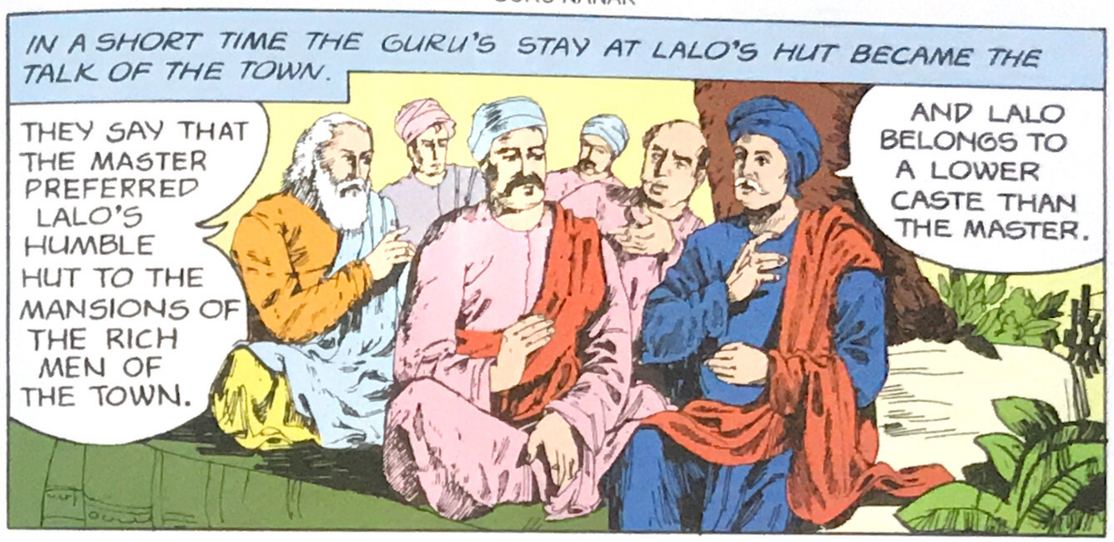

NANAK WAS SILENT FOR A MOMENT. THEN...
HE WHO HAS ASSIGNED ME THIS TASK WILL TAKE CARE OF ALL OF YOU.

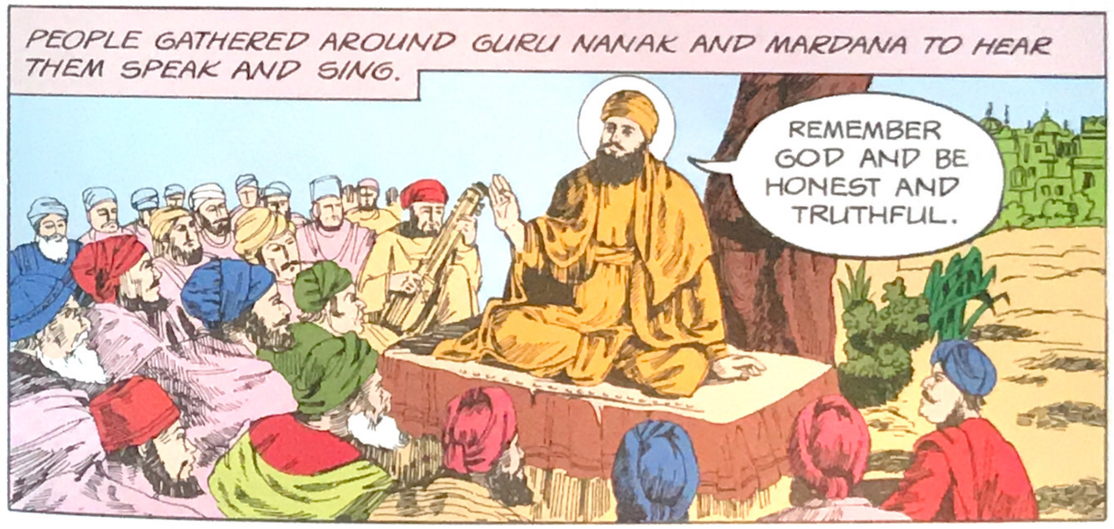

HIS PARENTS WERE ALMOST CONVINCED, BUT NOT NANKI AND SULAKHNI.
IF YOU GO AWAY WHO WILL CONSOLE SULAKHNI, THE BOYS AND ME, IN TIMES OF TROUBLE?
I SHALL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU IN SPIRIT. IF EVER YOU NEED ME I WILL COME TO YOU.

THEN TAKING LEAVE OF HIS FAMILY···

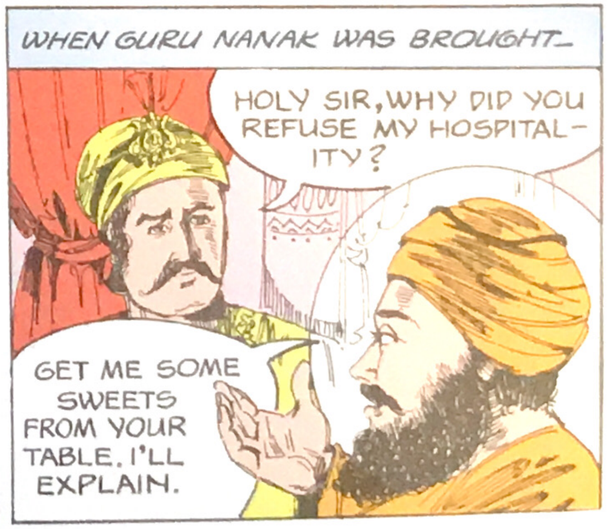
···HE WALKED WITH MARDANA FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE TILL THEY REACHED SAIDPUR.
A HUT. LET'S GO THERE, MASTER.

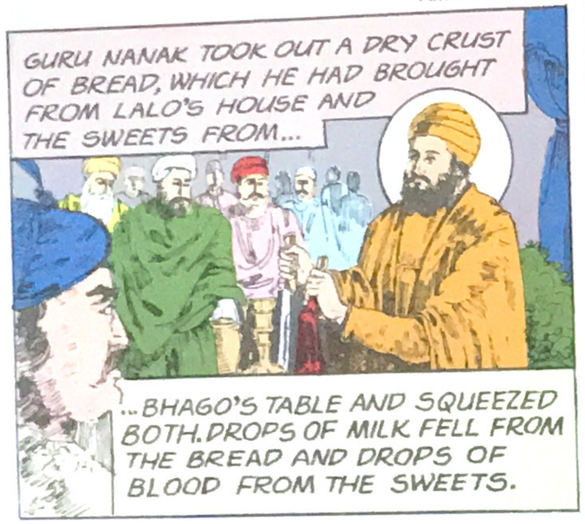
THE HUT BELONGED TO A POOR CARPENTER CALLED LALO.
MAY WE REST HERE FOR A WHILE?
MASTER, ENTER AND GRACE MY HUMBLE HUT.

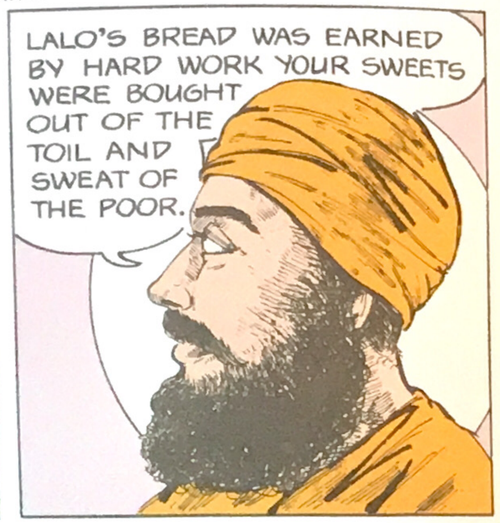

IN A SHORT TIME THE GURU'S STAY AT LALO'S HUT BECAME THE TALK OF THE TOWN.
THEY SAY THAT THE MASTER PREFERRED LALO'S HUMBLE HUT TO THE MANSIONS OF THE RICH MEN OF THE TOWN.
AND LALO BELONGS TO A LOWER CASTE THAN THE MASTER.


PEOPLE GATHERED AROUND GURU NANAK AND MARDANA TO HEAR THEM SPEAK AND SING.
REMEMBER GOD AND BE HONEST AND TRUTHFUL.

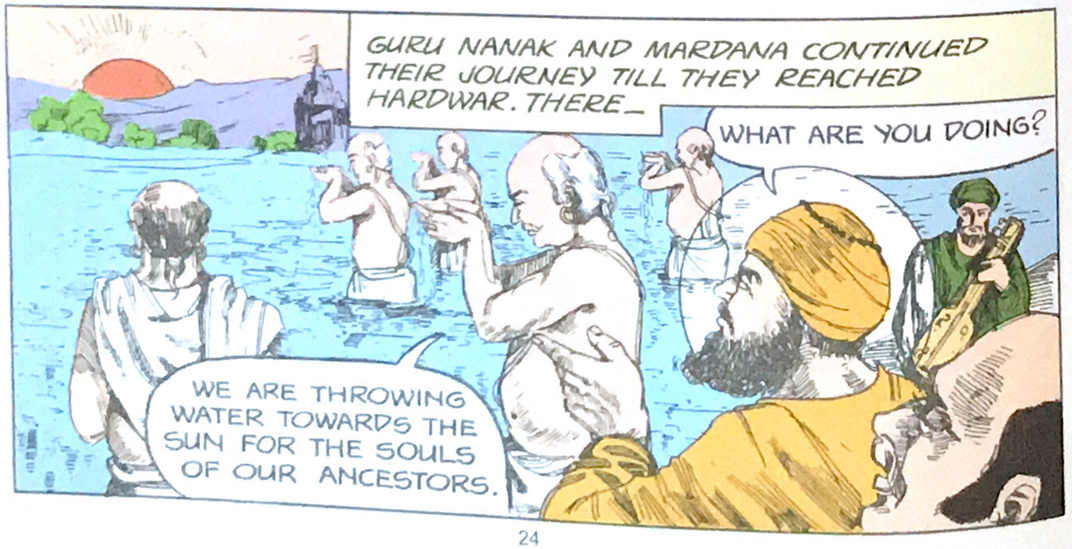
MALIK BHAGO, THE RICH ADMINISTRATOR OF SAIDPUR INVITED THE GURU TO HIS MANSION.
THE MASTER REFUSES TO COME.
THEN USE FORCE. BUT BRING HIM!

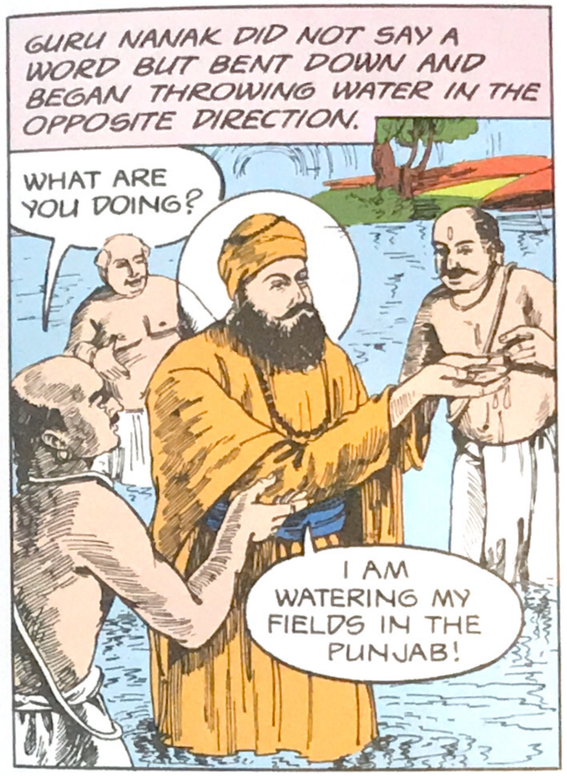

WHEN GURU NANAK WAS BROUGHT...
HOLY SIR, WHY DID YOU REFUSE MY HOSPITALITY?
GET ME SOME SWEETS FROM YOUR TABLE. I'LL EXPLAIN.

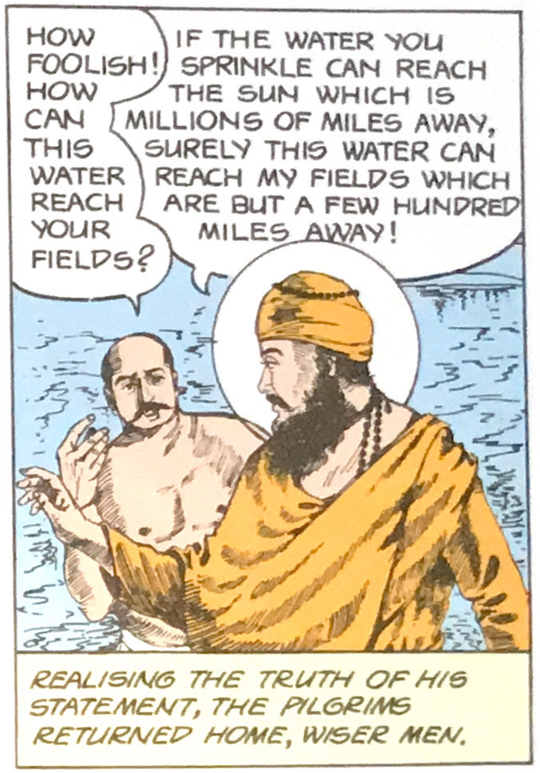

GURU NANAK TOOK OUT A DRY CRUST OF BREAD, WHICH HE HAD BROUGHT FROM LALO'S HOUSE AND THE SWEETS FROM...
...BHAGO'S TABLE AND SQUEEZED BOTH. DROPS OF MILK FELL FROM THE BREAD AND DROPS OF BLOOD FROM THE SWEETS.

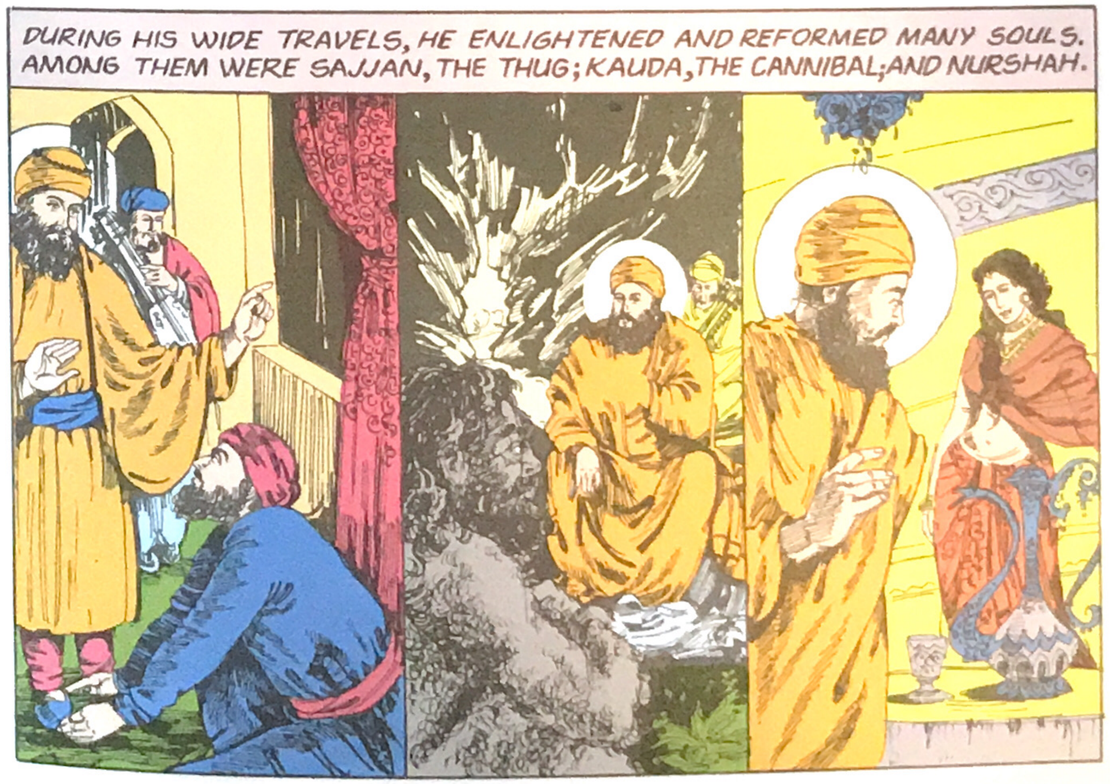

LALO'S BREAD WAS EARNED BY HARD WORK YOUR SWEETS WERE BOUGHT OUT OF THE TOIL AND SWEAT OF THE POOR.

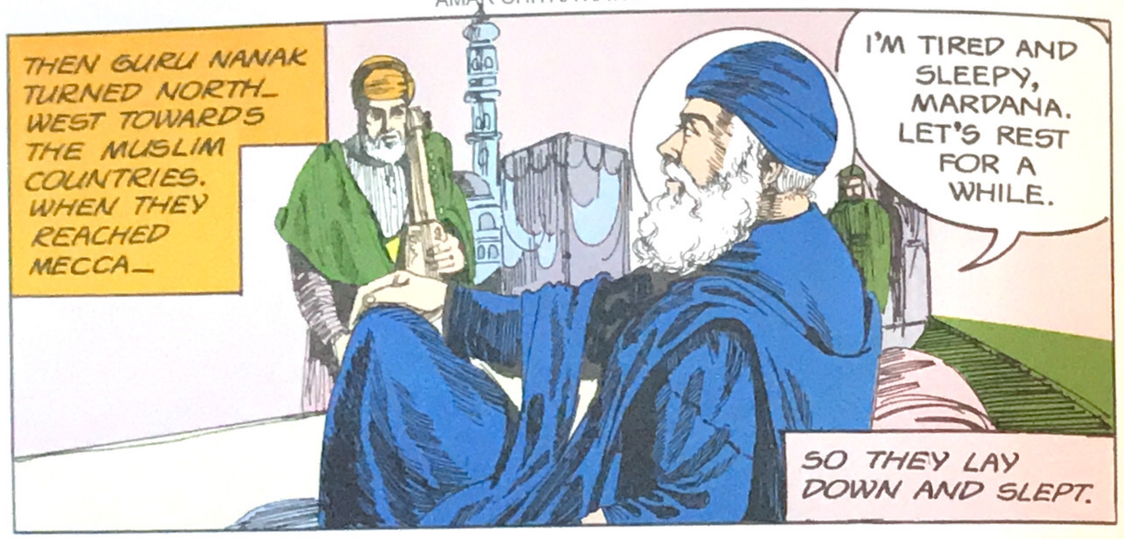
BHAGO WAS HUMBLED. HE BECAME CONTRITE.
HOLY SIR, I SHALL GIVE MY ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH BACK TO THE POOR AND NEEDY. I SHALL SPEND THE REST OF MY DAYS SERVING THEM.


GURU NANAK AND MARDANA CONTINUED THEIR JOURNEY TILL THEY REACHED HARDWAR. THERE_
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WE ARE THROWING WATER TOWARDS THE SUN FOR THE SOULS OF OUR ANCESTORS.

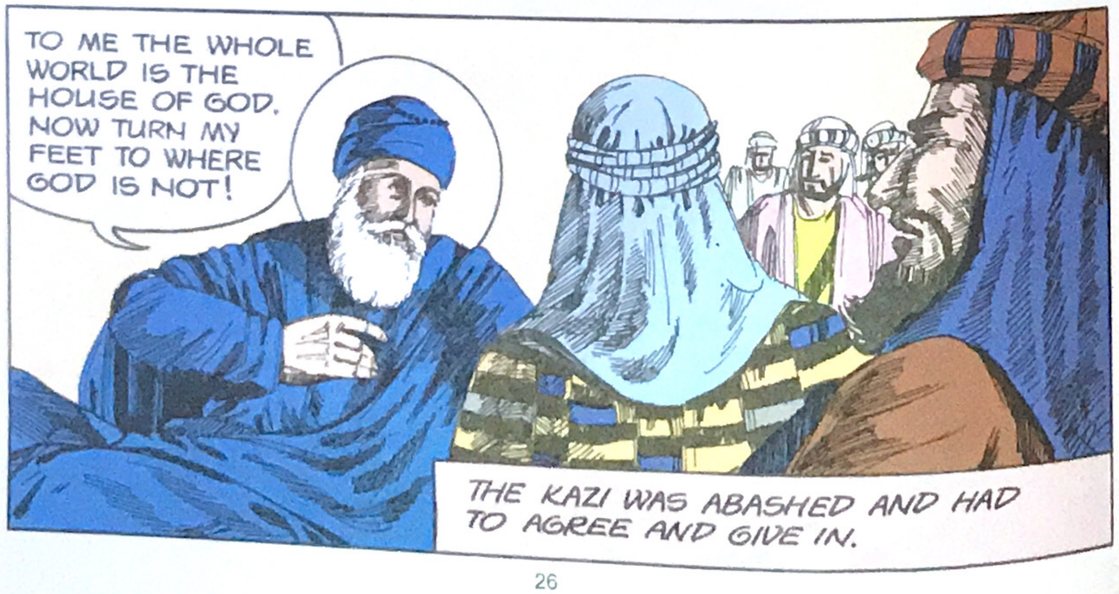

GURU NANAK DID NOT SAY A WORD BUT BENT DOWN AND BEGAN THROWING WATER IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I AM WATERING MY FIELDS IN THE PUNJAB!


HOW FOOLISH! HOW CAN THIS WATER REACH YOUR FIELDS?
IF THE WATER YOU SPRINKLE CAN REACH THE SUN WHICH IS MILLIONS OF MILES AWAY, SURELY THIS WATER CAN REACH MY FIELDS WHICH ARE BUT A FEW HUNDRED MILES AWAY!
REALISING THE TRUTH OF HIS STATEMENT, THE PILGRIMS RETURNED HOME, WISER MEN.

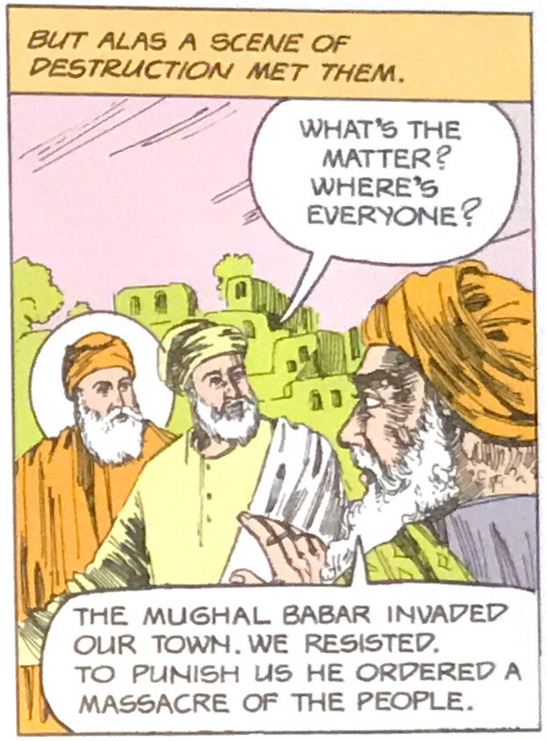

DURING HIS WIDE TRAVELS, HE ENLIGHTENED AND REFORMED MANY SOULS. AMONG THEM WERE SAJJAN, THE THUG; KAUDA, THE CANNIBAL; AND NURSHAH.


THEN GURU NANAK TURNED NORTH-WEST TOWARDS THE MUSLIM COUNTRIES. WHEN THEY REACHED MECCA—
I'M TIRED AND SLEEPY, MARDANA. LET'S REST FOR A WHILE.
SO THEY LAY DOWN AND SLEPT.

SUDDENLY AN IRATE VOICE AWOKE NANAK.
HOW DARE YOU POINT YOUR FEET TOWARDS THE KAABA?

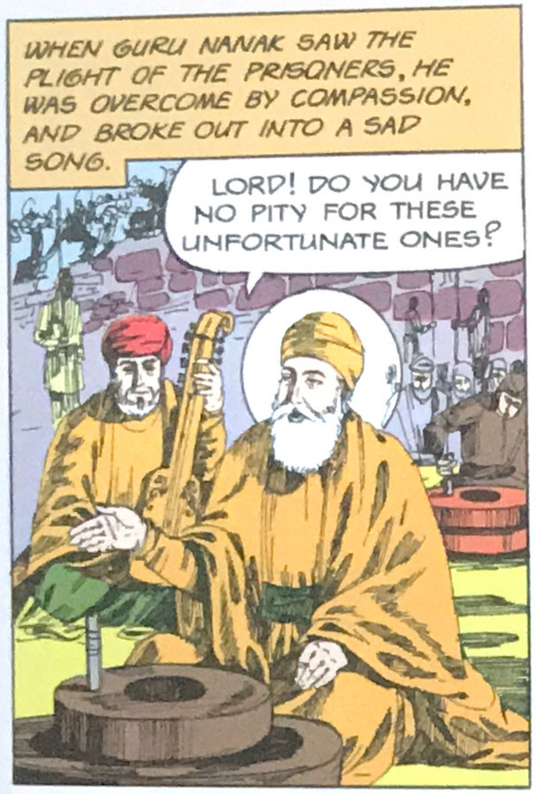

TO ME THE WHOLE WORLD IS THE HOUSE OF GOD. NOW TURN MY FEET TO WHERE GOD IS NOT!
THE KAZI WAS ABASHED AND HAD TO AGREE AND GIVE IN.

FROM MECCA GURU NANAK AND MARDANA VISITED BAGHDAD, TURKEY AND AFGHANISTAN AND THEN RETURNED TO INDIA, IN 1521.
LET'S GO BACK TO LALO'S HOME AND SEE HOW HE FARES.

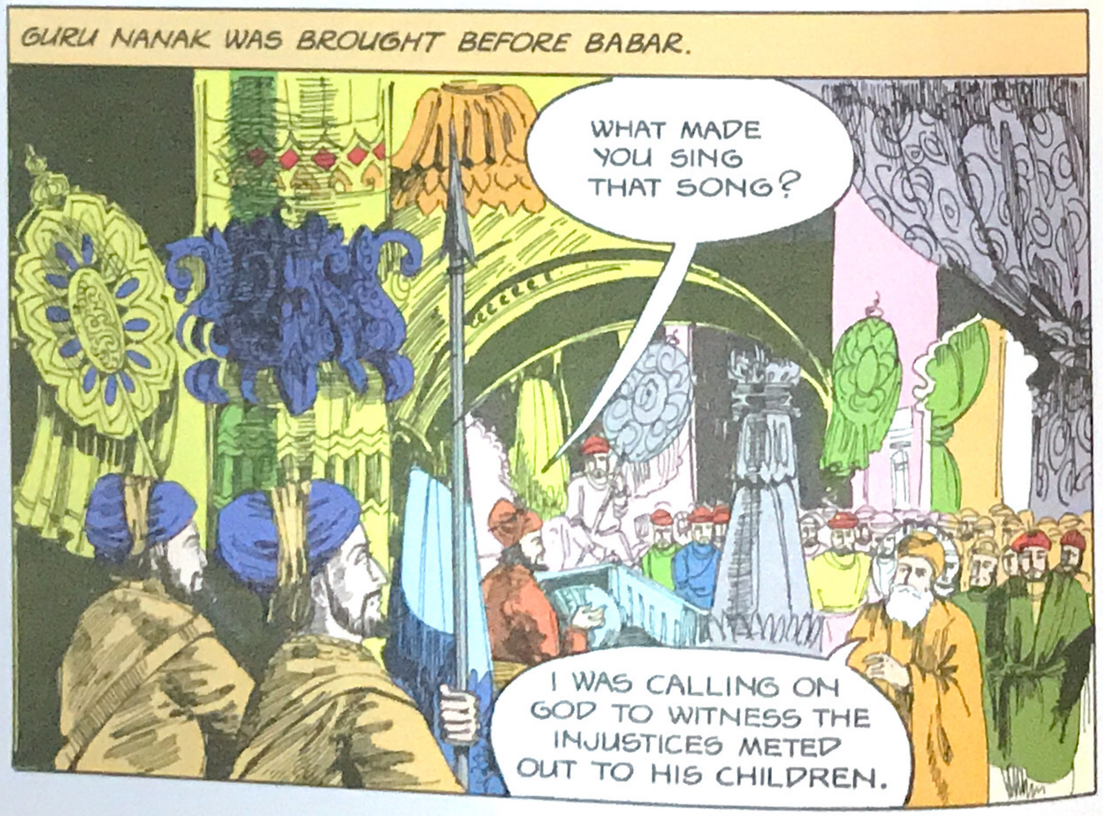

BUT ALAS A SCENE OF DESTRUCTION MET THEM.
WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHERE'S EVERYONE?
THE MUGHAL BABAR INVADED OUR TOWN. WE RESISTED. TO PUNISH US HE ORDERED A MASSACRE OF THE PEOPLE.

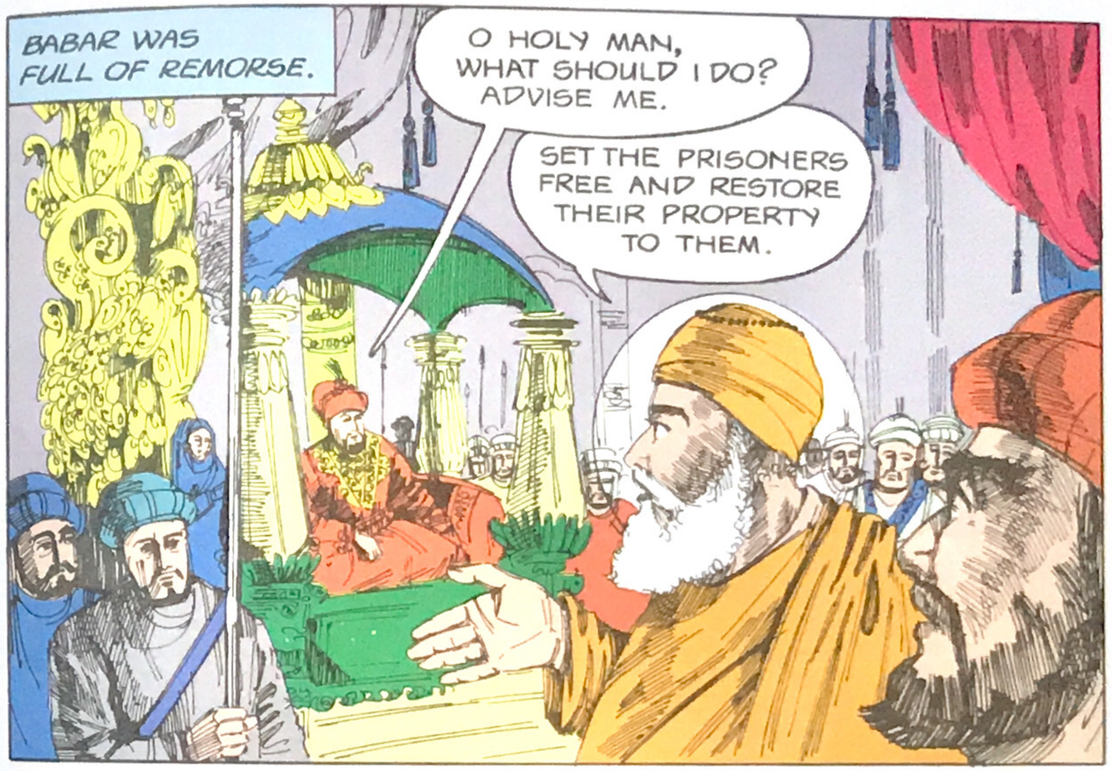
JUST THEN A FEW MUGHAL SOLDIERS MARCHED UP.
ROUND THEM UP, THE INFIDELS!
THUS GURU NANAK AND MARDANA WERE TAKEN PRISONERS.

THEY WERE THROWN INTO A CELL WHERE A NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN WERE MADE TO GRIND CORN ON HEAVY STONES.
OH! AH! I'M ABOUT TO DIE. I CAN'T WORK THE MILL ANY LONGER! AH...H...H.

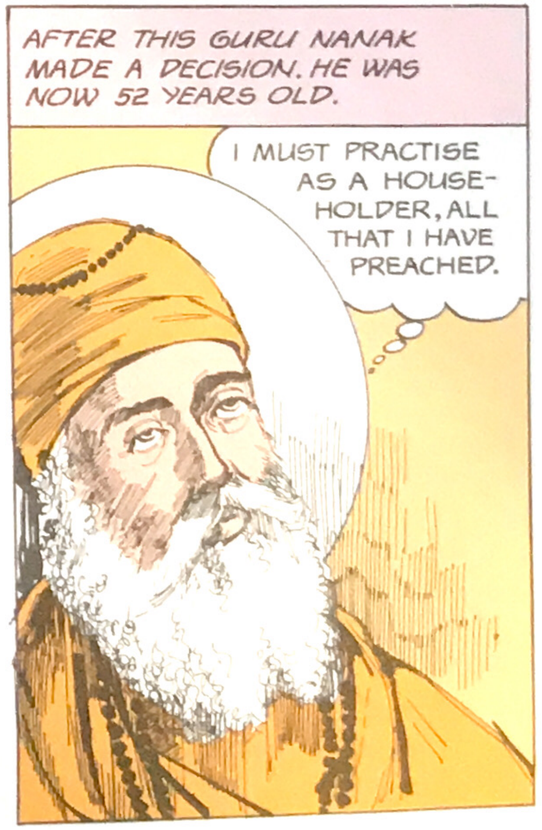

WHEN GURU NANAK SAW THE PLIGHT OF THE PRISONERS, HE WAS OVERCOME BY COMPASSION, AND BROKE OUT INTO A SAD SONG.
LORD! DO YOU HAVE NO PITY FOR THESE UNFORTUNATE ONES?

BABAR HEARD THE SONG AND WAS DEEPLY MOVED.
THE HAUNTING VOICE CUTS THROUGH MY HEART. WHO IS THE SINGER? BRING HIM TO ME!


GURU NANAK WAS BROUGHT BEFORE BABAR.
WHAT MADE YOU SING THAT SONG?
I WAS CALLING ON GOD TO WITNESS THE INJUSTICES METED OUT TO HIS CHILDREN.

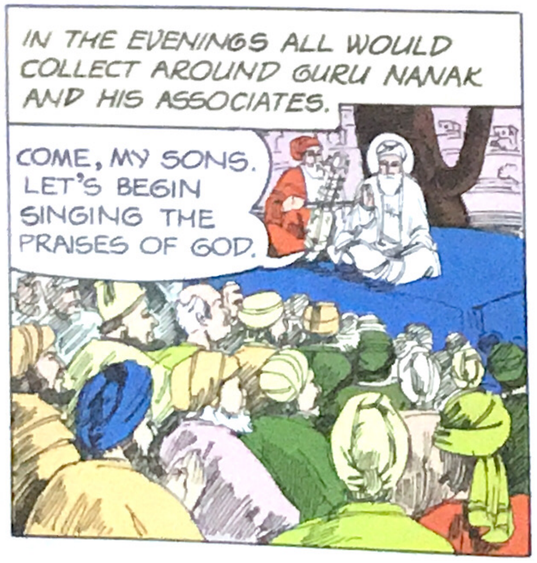

BABAR WAS FULL OF REMORSE.
O HOLY MAN, WHAT SHOULD I DO? ADVISE ME.
SET THE PRISONERS FREE AND RESTORE THEIR PROPERTY TO THEM.

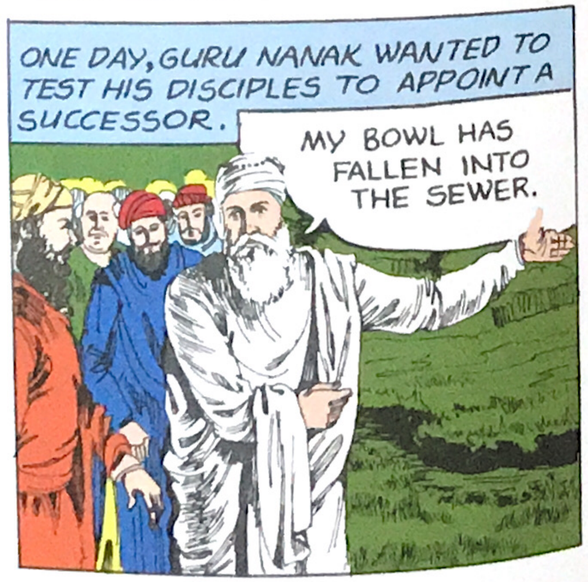
BABAR IMMEDIATELY OBEYED THE COMMAND.
HOLY MAN, I'VE DONE AS YOU BADE ME. PRAY BLESS ME THAT I BECOME THE EMPEROR OF INDIA.
YOUR WISH WILL BE FULFILLED. BUT REMEMBER TO BE A JUST RULER WHOSE SOLE INTEREST IS THE HAPPINESS OF HIS PEOPLE.

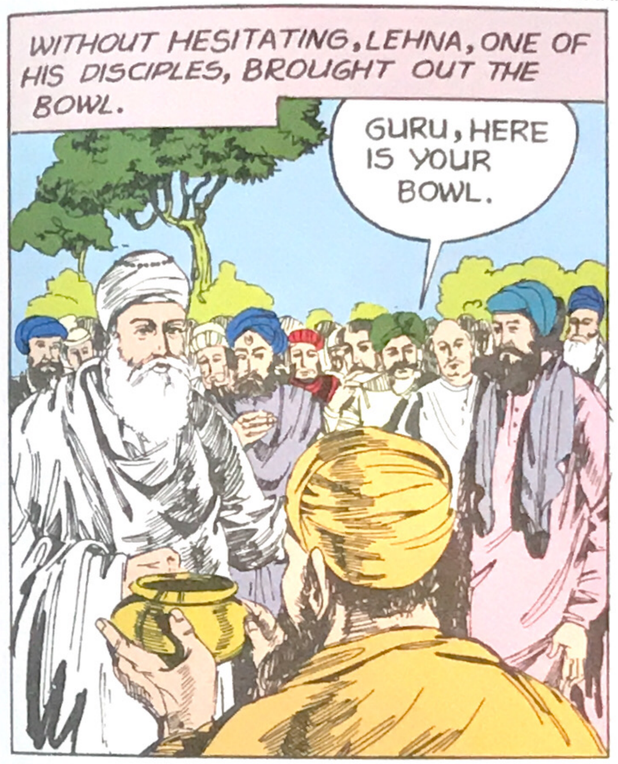

AFTER THIS GURU NANAK MADE A DECISION. HE WAS NOW 52 YEARS OLD.
I MUST PRACTISE AS A HOUSE-HOLDER, ALL THAT I HAVE PREACHED.

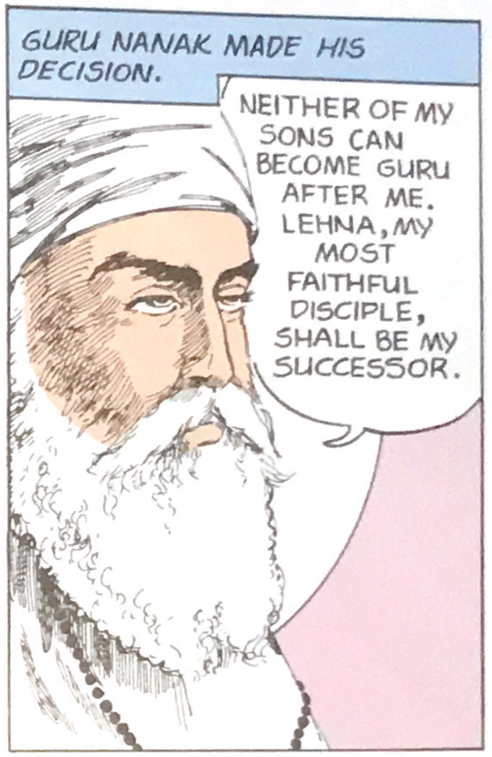
SO HE CAST OFF HIS ORANGE ROBES AND SETTLED DOWN TO A FARMER'S LIFE AT KARTARPUR.

HE ESTABLISHED A COMMUNITY KITCHEN OR 'LANGAR' WHERE ALL WERE WELCOME.
SIR, IS THERE ROOM FOR ME?
WE HAVE ENOUGH ROOM FOR ALL WHO WISH TO WORK AND EAT. IT IS ONLY IDLERS FOR WHOM WE HAVE NO ROOM.

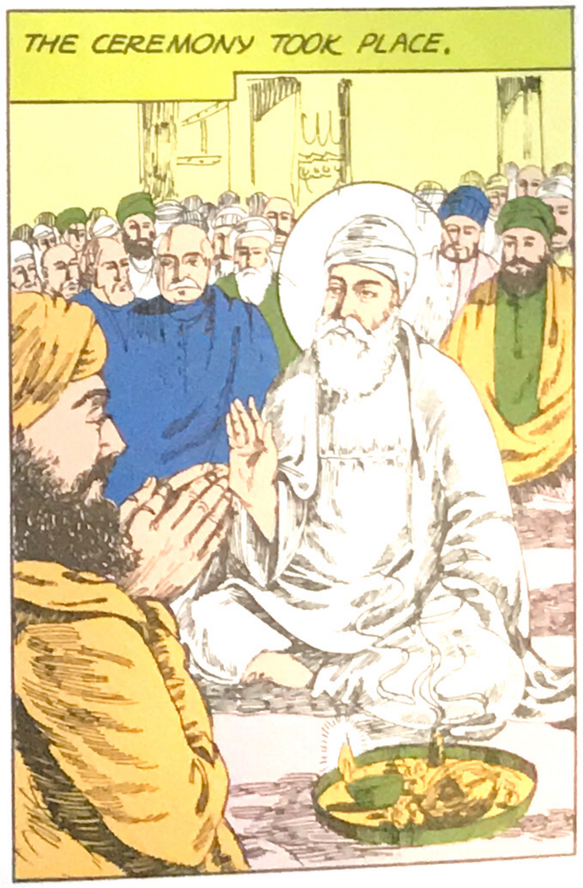

IN THE EVENINGS ALL WOULD COLLECT AROUND GURU NANAK AND HIS ASSOCIATES.
COME, MY SONS. LET'S BEGIN SINGING THE PRAISES OF GOD.

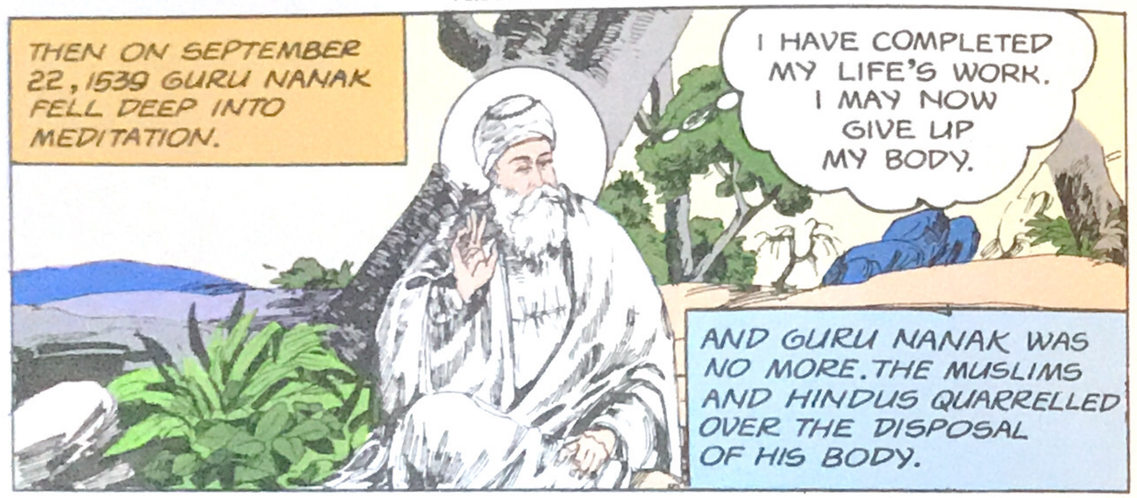

ONE DAY, GURU NANAK WANTED TO TEST HIS DISCIPLES TO APPOINT A SUCCESSOR.
MY BOWL HAS FALLEN INTO THE SEWER.

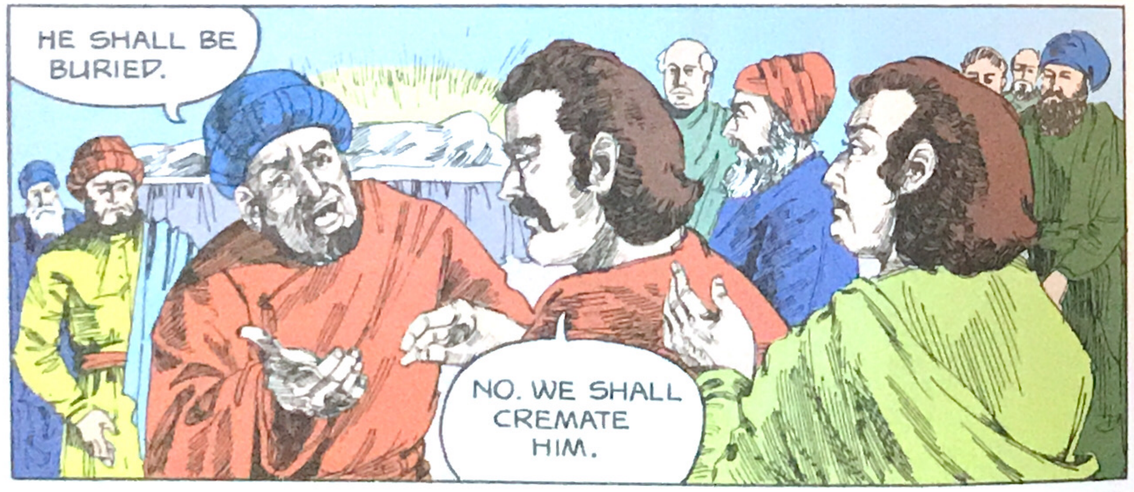

WITHOUT HESITATING, LEHNA, ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES, BROUGHT OUT THE BOWL.
GURU, HERE IS YOUR BOWL.

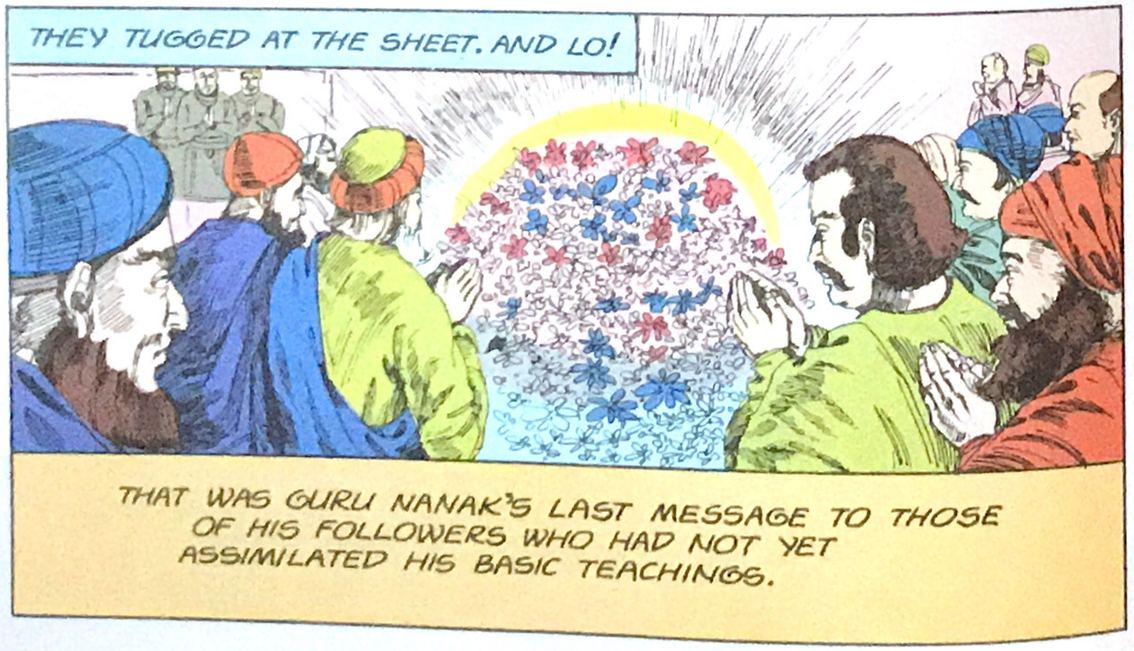

GURU NANAK MADE HIS DECISION.
NEITHER OF MY SONS CAN BECOME GURU AFTER ME. LEHNA, MY MOST FAITHFUL DISCIPLE, SHALL BE MY SUCCESSOR.

ONE EVENING...
I APPOINT LEHNA AS MY SUCCESSOR. HE WILL BE CALLED GURU ANGAD.


THE CEREMONY TOOK PLACE.







WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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Best known stories from the Epics and the Puranas

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Ganesha
Ganesha And The Moon
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Ghatotkacha
Hanuman
Hanuman To The Rescue
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Krishna
Krishna And Jarasandha
Krishna And Narakasura
Krishna And Rukmini
Krishna And Shishupala
Krishna And The False Vaasudeva
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Kumbhakarna
Mahabharata
Mahiravana
Nachiketa
Nahusha
Nala Damayanti
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Ravana Humbled
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Tapati
Thanjavur
The Churning Of The Ocean
The Gita
The Golden Mongoose
The King In A Parrot's Body
The Lord Of Lanka
The Pandava Princes
The Pandavas In Hiding
The Parijata Tree
The Sons Of Rama
The Syamantaka Gem
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Tripura
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Eknath
Fa Hien
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Guru Har Gobind
Guru Nanak
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